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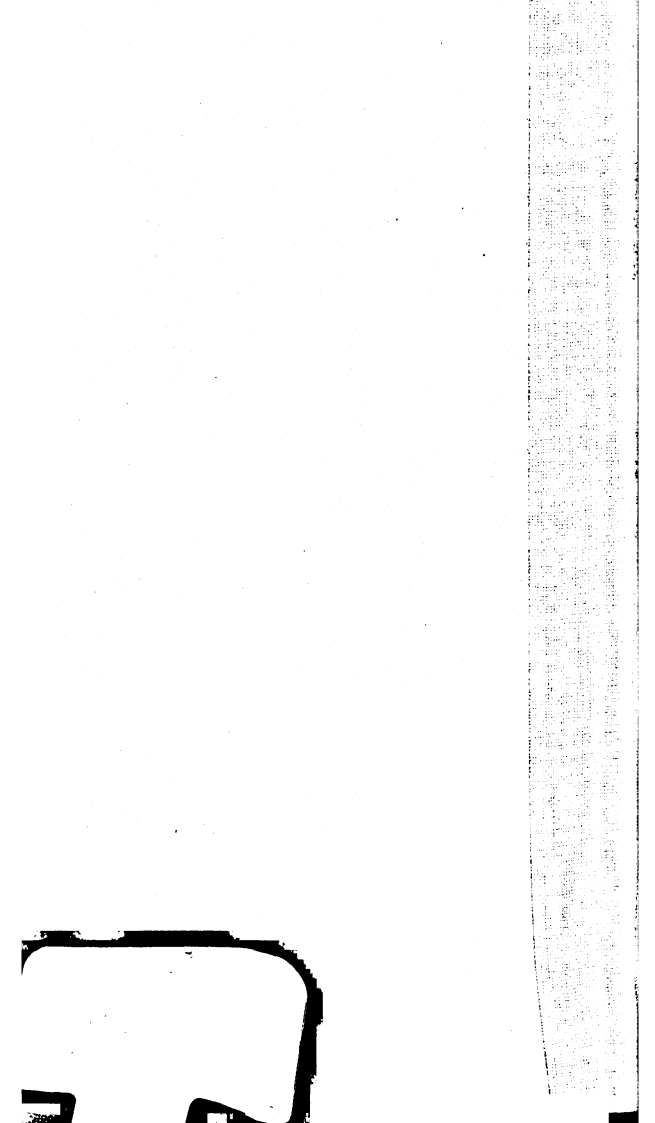
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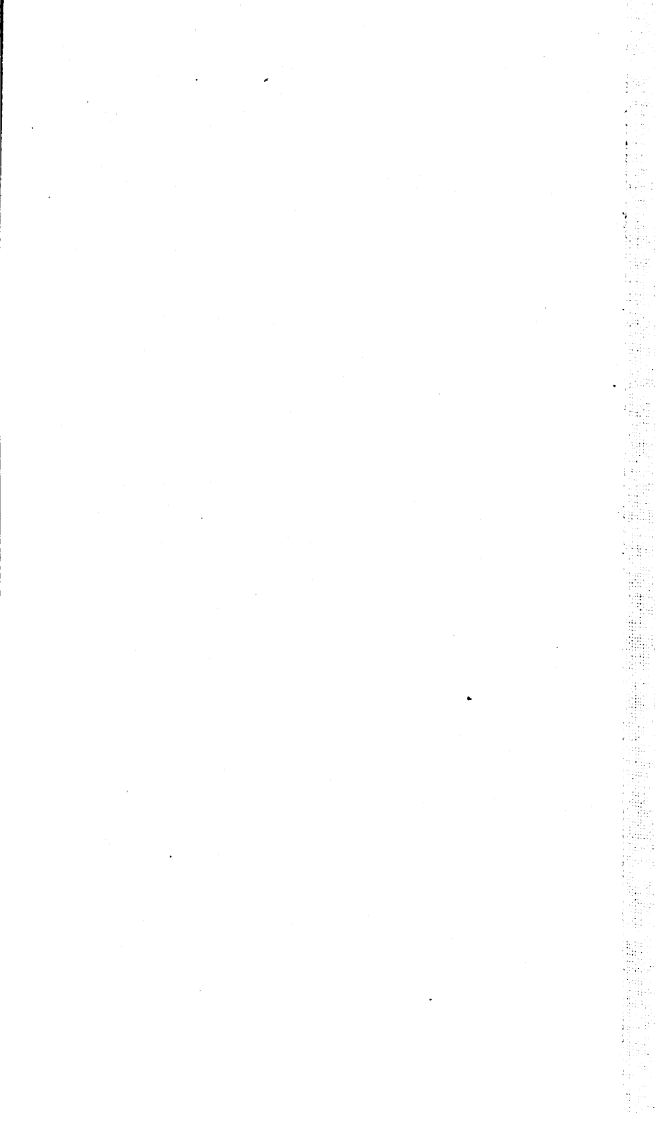


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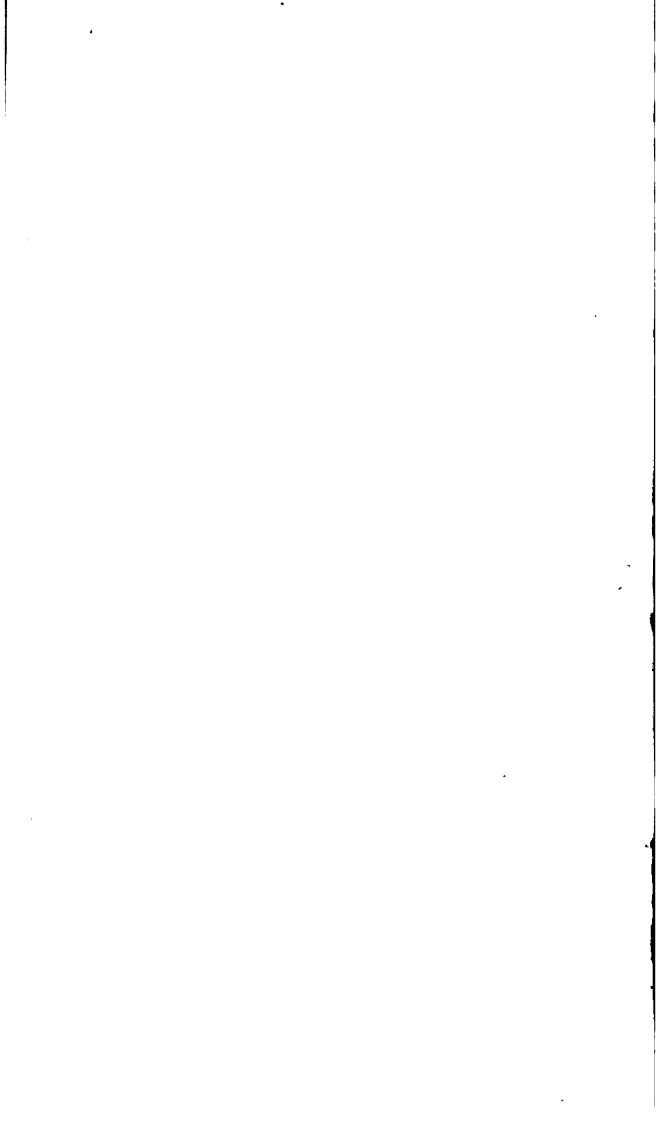














Samuel ) 1756-26

j'ai donne' l'intendence de ce  
ouvrage avec des notes sur  
1793 et 1800 pour le  
Acquisition des Peguise  
le de Ceylan

(Hunter)  
BGR

*Pegu*

A

# CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

CLIMATE,  
PRODUCE,  
TRADE,

GOVERNMENT,  
MANNERS, and  
CUSTOMS.

OF THE

## KINGDOM OF PEGU;

INTERSPERSED WITH

REMARKS MORAL AND POLITICAL.

WITH AN

## A P P E N D I X;

CONTAINING,

- I. ENQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF THE VARIETY  
OBSERVABLE IN THE FLEECES OF SHEEP IN  
DIFFERENT CLIMATES.
- II. DESCRIPTION OF SOME CAVES AT ELEPHANTA,  
AMBOLA, AND CANARA,

THE WHOLE BEING THE RESULT OF OBSERVATIONS  
MADE ON A VOYAGE PERFORMED BY ORDER OF THE  
HON. EAST-INDIA COMPANY,

By *William* W. HUNTER, A. M. SURGEON.

CALCUTTA PRINTED:

LONDON REPRINTED:

FOR J. SEWELL, CORNHILL; AND J. DEBRET, PICCADILLY.

MDCCLXXXIX. *Fr*



THE  
PUBLIC

ASTOR LENOX  
TILDEN FOUNDATION

## ADVERTISEMENT.

AS the subject of the following pages was begun to be digested two years ago ; and some changes in the state of the country which they describe, have, since that time, come to the author's knowledge ; the reader will observe a few anachronisms, which it would have been difficult, and perhaps not very material, to guard against. Indeed, to delineate exactly the present state of a

a 2. country

## ADVERTISEMENT.

country where revolutions are so frequent, and so sudden, as they are in Pegu, is next to impossible. Suffice it, then, to remark, that what is contained in the sequel relates to the state of affairs as they were in August and September 1782, except where the contrary is expressly mentioned.

INTRO-

## INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE country we are about to describe is one of those which we have but a superficial knowledge of ; and the reason is, that it is very little frequented by Europeans. The three great motives that have hitherto led us to form a more intimate acquaintance with the remoter regions of the globe, have been the rage of conquest, zeal for propagating religion, and the spirit of commerce. PEGU has never become the object of the first, with any European power ; and, tho' a few Missionaries may have been sent there, for the purposes of the second, they never were able to gain such a footing as to be able to give us a distinct account of the country, or of its inhabitants. Besides, even when they had an opportunity of knowing the truth, a prejudice in favour of

## INTRODUCTION.

that religion whose interest they came to promote, and a desire to render the professors of every other as odious as possible, has led them into frequent misrepresentations. Lastly, the trade to Pegu has never been esteemed a national concern; it has been always very limited, and carried on by a few private adventurers, who were in general such as had not a capital sufficient to begin any other branch of commerce. Any man who could find money enough to purchase a small vessel on the Coast of Coromandel, might, by carrying a little tobacco, some blue cloth, and a few iron nails, to the island of Carnicobar, get in exchange for those articles, which had cost him almost nothing, a ship-load of cocoa-nuts: for these he could procure at Pegu a cargo of wood, which he afterwards sold to great advantage either on the Coast or in Bengal.

THAT the commerce of Pegu has not yet become an object of greater attention, will, I hope, appear from the following pages

## INTRODUCTION.

pages not to be owing so much to its want of importance, as to other accidental circumstances; and I do not despair of convincing the impartial reader, that it is both worth our while and practicable in itself to remove these obstacles; and from putting our intercourse with Pegu on a more respectable footing, and extending it on a larger scale, to derive great national advantage.

VIEWED in this light, the information we have been able to collect with regard to this country is a matter of some importance to the politician; but, differently considered, the philosopher may perhaps find something in it not unworthy of his attention, as furnishing materials for completing the history of the human mind. Since an emulation arose among the nations of Europe for making discoveries in countries before unknown, this most noble of all sciences, as well as almost every other, has received great improvements. The moral philosopher has been furnished by those un-

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cultivated

## INTRODUCTION.

cultivated nations with facts which he would have looked for in vain among people whose minds had been made, by habitual intercourse, to deviate from their natural bent, and conform themselves to the artificial rules prescribed by custom.

It is a curious and a pleasing task to trace a resemblance between some of the customs that prevail in those remote and uncivilized countries, and those of nations to whose manners we have been more habituated ; and it is also a task, from the prosecution of which we may derive no contemptible improvement. There are many things established by custom, nay, in some instances stamped with the sanction of law, and practised every day among us, which, in the eye of an impartial observer, are unreasonable and absurd : having been accustomed from our infancy to see them, we become totally insensible of their impropriety : yet place before our eyes the practice of a distant and barbarous people, which  
agrees

## INTRODUCTION.

agrees with our own in every essential point, and only varies in a few inconsiderable circumstances ; the absurdity strikes our sense at once, and is thence reflected on that custom of our own which we had formerly looked on without any disapprobation. It is also in the history of those nations where society is yet in its infancy, that we must look for the natural and undisguised operation of the human passions ; for in vain should we expect to find the genuine effect of those emotions in a race of men among whom refinement has introduced a studied uniformity of conduct on all occasions.

HAVING thus endeavoured to shew that his subject is not altogether void of importance, the author hopes it will not be deemed impertinent to add a few words respecting the materials from which the subsequent relation is collected. And first, a great many of the facts he learnt by actual observation ; having been, in July 1782, on  
a pas-

## INTRODUCTION.

a passage from Bengal, on the service of the Hon. East-India Company \*, on board of a † ship which was totally dismasted, and obliged to put into the river Syriam to refit ; and secondly, he was informed of others, by conversation both with the natives, who are very communicative, and many of them speak the language of Hindostan, and with foreigners of different nations who have been settled in that country for many years. From the short time he resided there, his information with respect to many circumstances was unavoidably imperfect ; but where this was the case, he has always frankly confessed his ignorance, and never ventured to assert as a fact any thing which he was not either an eye-witness of, or informed about, on enquiry, from the most unquestionable authority. He hopes that his having communicated the little information he has been able to collect, will in-

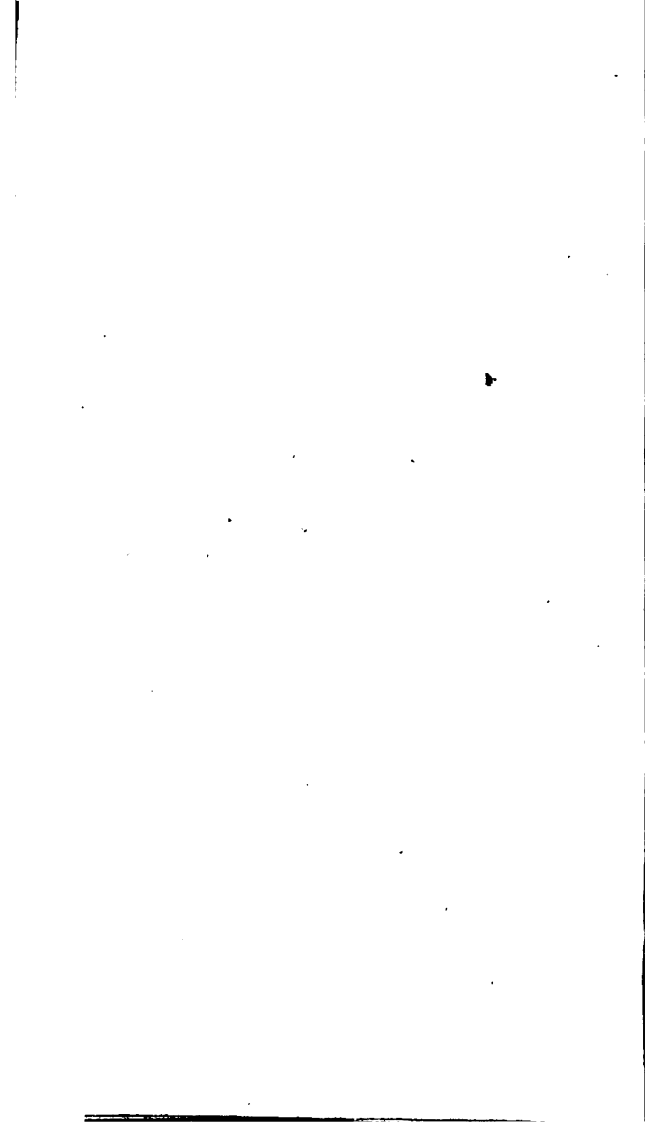
\* To join the detachment in the Carnatic.

† The Success Galley.

## INTRODUCTION.

·duce some person who has had better opportunities of being informed, to give to the world a more complete account of the matter ; and, in the mean time, he will lie under the greatest obligations to any Gentleman, whose observation has been more accurate or more extensive than his own, if he will condescend to correct him where he has erred, or communicate any certain information with respect to those points, where the author has been able to give nothing better than doubt or conjecture.

CON-



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A

CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

KINGDOM OF PEGU.

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C H A P. I.

*Situation and extent of PEGU—A short account of the Revolutions in its Government—Description of the Capital—of the Coast—Face of the Country—Climate.*

**P**EGU is a kingdom of the farther India, situated on the E. side of the Bay of Bengal, between the 15th and 24th degrees of N. Lat. It is bounded on the west and south-west, by the sea; on the south-east, by the kingdom of Siam; on the north, by that range of mountains which bounds the empire of China.

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to the south-west; and on the north-west, by the kingdom of Ava. Its extreme length is, from S. by W. to N. by E. about six hundred miles; and its greatest breadth, about three hundred and fifty miles. These, at least, are the limits described by the generality of geographers, and represented in our maps; but it must be confessed, that the boundaries of this country, except on the sea-coast, where it has been frequented by navigators, have never been ascertained with any tolerable degree of accuracy.

THIS country was formerly subject to a prince of its own, who did not acknowledge a dependance on any other power; but about forty years ago, there happened a great revolution, by which this once powerful kingdom was reduced to the state in which it now remains; that is to say, nothing more than a province of the kingdom of *Ava*, governed by deputies sent from thence, who may be removed at the pleasure of their sovereign. The particulars of this revolution I have not been able to learn; only, there was one remarkable circumstance attending it, which it is worth while to mention, as it gives us a higher idea of those

those people's abilities in the art of war, than we should otherwise be disposed to entertain. At the time when the people of Ava, after having defeated the Pegu army, penetrated to the capital, there was a French frigate lying in the harbour. The commander and his crew took some steps to oppose the invaders, but without effect; the city was taken, and all who made any resistance were put to the sword. The victors next turned their arms against the ship. Those haughty Europeans, secure within their wooden wall, and trusting to the dormant thunder that lay behind it, thought all the power of Ava unable to hurt them: how great then must have been their surprise, to behold innumerable boats, filled with armed men, who, not in the least deterred by seeing many of their companions sunk, and their boats dashed to pieces, persisted in their attempt, surrounded and boarded them on all sides! The officers were put to death without mercy, and the others condemned to perpetual slavery. Some of them remain there at this day. However, we shall lower our ideas about the military prowess of the troops of Ava, if we give credit to another account which is given of this affair, and which indeed appears to me the more probable one

of the two. They say, that a great number of fire-rafts were sent down the stream; that the ship, to avoid them, was obliged to get under way; that she soon after ran aground, was boarded in the confusion, and so became an easy prey. However this may be, the people of Ava made this country their own by the right of conquest; and the first use they made of that right was, to remove the capital from the spot where it stood, on one branch of the river *Syriam*, to another branch of the same river. The old metropolis had the same name with the river on which it stood; the new one got that of *Rangoon*, which it retains to this day\*.

\* Since the above account was written, a ship arrived at *Coringa* from *Rangoon*, brings accounts of another revolution having taken place there; the antient Peguers having risen against the Birmah government, and expelled them from the place. The town is said to have been almost totally burned down in this commotion, which is thought to have happened between the 5th and 15th of September 1783. This is not the first attempt the Peguers have made to recover their independence; but they were never so successful before. There can be no doubt that the king of Ava will endeavour, with his whole force, to bring them again under subjection, and what the result of the contest may be, time only can determine. In the mean time, it may deserve the consideration of politicians, how far it may be for the honour or the interest of an European power to interfere in the dispute.

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It consists of two parts, the one of which is enclosed by a high stoccade, and furnished with gates, but without a wall, or any place where guns can be mounted, and this is called the fort. The other part extends a considerable way down the river, and is entirely open. The houses are all constructed of wood, and raised on pretty high pillars, which is a necessary precaution, as the flowing of the tide lays most of the town under water. The streets are not paved, and are only passable by means of a plank, which is laid along from one end to the other; so that when two persons meet, one of them is often obliged to step into the mire.

THE whole country is low, and the land can only be seen at a very small distance from sea. Add to this, that the water is shallow a great way off from the coast, so that one gets into three or four fathoms before one is within sight of land. Thus a person who is unacquainted is much at a loss; and a circumstance which, unless he is aware of it, will encrease his con-

By later information, I find that the Peguers only kept possession of Rangoon for three days; the Birmahs having, at the end of that time, reduced them and recovered their authority.

faſion, is this, that the chart publiſhed in our Engliſh directory, in even the lateſt editions, lays down the entrance of the river twelve miles too much to the fourthward. Hence it comes, that, after a man has got into the latitude of the place, by the chart, he is ſurpriſed to find no land within the reach of his eye. This error is rectified in a new chart of Pegu, which is inſerted in the laſt edition of the French *Neptunus Oriental*. The tides, near the bar, at the new and full moon, riſe about twenty feet perpendicular, and their flow is amazingly rapid. When the *Success Galley* came out of the river *Syriam*, in September 1782, ſhe gradually ſhoaled her water, till the man at the lead called out *two fathoms and one foot*, which was leſs, by two feet, than the draught of the ſhip: ſhe was, conſequently, aground; but the mud is ſo ſoft here, that it gives no reſiſtance for a fathom under its ſurface. She deepened, by degrees, into three fathoms, when an anchor was let go; and, the flood coming in, the water roſe, in a very ſhort time, to fix fathoms and a quarter.

FROM what has been ſaid concerning the ſituation of this country; and, ſtill more, from  
the

the prospect one has, in going up the river, which is lined on both sides with thickets and marshes, one is naturally led to suppose, that it must be very unhealthy; and yet there are the strongest reasons to believe, that the person who should suppose so would form a most erroneous judgment. The natives are, perhaps, the most robust and muscular race of men that we meet with any where in India; they are seldom attacked by diseases; and, what is still more to the purpose, Europeans, who have lived here many years, enjoy an uninterrupted good health. A person that has resided, even for a short time, in Pegu, would also join the testimony of his own sensations to all these other proofs of its salubrity. Even during the rains, which all over India make the most disagreeable and sickly time of the year, the air, in this place, is temperate, and has an elasticity unknown, at the corresponding season, in any other part; which gives vigour to the whole animal system, and enables it to support a great degree of fatigue. Perhaps the rapid motion of the tides may account, in some measure, for this unexpected healthiness of the climate; at least, I know of no other cause to which it can be ascribed.

## C H A P. II.

*Description of the Inhabitants—their Persons—a remarkable Badge worn by the Birmahs—Dress—Manners and Disposition—Military Character.*

THE inhabitants, as I have observed, are of a muscular make; their stature is about the middle size, and their limbs, in general, well proportioned. Their complexion is swarthy, being a medium between that of the Chinese and of the inhabitants of Bengal. In feature, they resemble the Malays; their face is broad; their eyes, large and black; the nose, flat; the cheek-bones prominent; and the mouth, extremely wide. They wear, on the chin, a tuft of hair, of unequal lengths; and shave the rest of the face. Their teeth are always of a jet-black, which, however disgusting it may be to an European eye, is, among them, esteemed a great ornament; and accordingly, they are at very great pains to accomplish it\*.

\* I could not learn at Pegu the method of dyeing the teeth practised there, but the following is a particular account of the preparation used in this country for that purpose.

THEY wear various ornaments in their ears, many of them in common with other eastern nations; but one that appears to be peculiar to this people, is a thin plate of gold, rolled up in the form of a quill, about the thickness of a finger, which is thrust into a hole made in the usual part of the ear, large enough to receive

*To make a BLACK.*

|                                |   |            |
|--------------------------------|---|------------|
| Take of the pulp of full-grown | } | 20 parts,  |
| Myrobalans,                    |   |            |
| Of green Vitriol,              | - | 3 do.      |
| Of Iron Filings,               | - | 6 do.      |
| Of blue Vitriol,               | - | 1-10th do. |
| Of small unripe Myrobalans,    | - | 1-half do. |
| Of Gum Arabic,                 | - | 1 do.      |
| Of Oil of mustard-feed,        | - | 5 do.      |

Macerate the Myrobalans for a night in 80 parts of water: In the morning, squeeze out the water, and put it on the fire to boil. Pulverise the other ingredients (except the oil) and add them to the infusion while it is boiling. When it acquires a thick consistence, add the oil.

This preparation is spread on a leaf of Betel, and applied, at bed-time, to the teeth, where it is suffered to remain till morning.

When they wish to give it a reddish tinge, they add to these ingredients a certain proportion of *Buckum*; a porous wood of a red colour, which it communicates to water, by infusion.

There are many other formulæ, but the above is sufficient for a specimen. The basis of them all, is a vegetable astringent combined with some preparation of Iron.

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it. The foregoing description is chiefly applicable to the Birmahs, that is, the natives of Ava, or their descendants, who are now very numerous here, as the Government is entirely in their hands. The original inhabitants of Pegu have faces more nearly approaching to the oval form; their features are softer, more regular, and seem to express greater sense and acuteness than those of the Birmahs, with whom, in other respects, they nearly agree. The Birmahs, however, who pique themselves on being descended from the conquerors, and wish to be distinguished from the nation they subdued, use a badge for that purpose, which we must conclude they value very highly, from the sufferings they undergo to obtain it. The thigh of every Birmah, including the hip and knee, is of a jet-black, which has a very singular appearance; and this mark they receive in their childhood. It is made by the repeated application of an instrument with a great number of sharp points, placed close together, something like that used in carding wool, till the part is entirely covered with drops of blood. After this they apply a liquid, of which galls is a principal ingredient. This excites a considerable degree of fever; and it is computed  
by

by the natives themselves, that about two children out of five perish, in consequence of the operation. Some persons of a higher rank, have, instead of this, their thighs covered with the representations of tigers, and other wild beasts, imprinted by a process similar to the former. I would not be meant, by any thing that has been said, to insinuate that this practice was first instituted on the conquest of Pegu by the Birmahs; on the contrary, I believe it to be of much greater antiquity; and all I mean to say, is, that the accidental circumstance of its preserving a separation between them and the original natives of the country, has undoubtedly enhanced its value in their esteem. It is not easy to conjecture what has given rise to an operation, which occasions so much pain and danger to the person who undergoes it; but it is not altogether peculiar to this people; for we meet with practices similar to it among other nations: That which resembles it the most, is the operation of *tattawing*, used by the natives of Otaheite.

THE men have long black hair, tied on the top of the head; over which some wear a white handkerchief, in form of a turban; others go with

with their heads bare, and decorated with flowers. They wear about their loins a piece of party-coloured silk, or cotton cloth, which is afterwards passed over the shoulder, and goes round the body. Those of higher rank have this cloth so long as to hang down over their thighs and legs; which, among the lower class of people, are bare. The women have a kind of short jacket, to cover the upper part of their bodies; and the remainder of their dress is a piece of cloth, which is fastened round the loins, and hangs down to the ankles. This is doubled over a few inches at the fore part, where it is open, so that the thigh is discovered, in walking, through its whole length. This mode of dress, they tell us, was first introduced by a certain Queen of Ava, who did it with the view of reclaiming the hearts of the men from an unnatural and detestable passion, to which they were, at that time, totally abandoned; and succeeded so well, that she is remembered at this day with gratitude, as a public benefactress to the kingdom.

IN their behaviour to strangers, they are obliging, and shew a degree of frankness that one would by no means expect to meet in a nation

tion whom we have been accustomed to look upon as barbarous. They express a great curiosity to see the manners of strangers, which makes them often come into their houses, and observe all that is doing, without appearing to be under any constraint. They also take pleasure in imitating the dress and behaviour of those who come among them, and appear highly delighted when a stranger imitates any of theirs. In return, if you go into their houses, you are received with great hospitality; the people are eager to find something that may give you satisfaction, and seem very happy when you shew any marks of being pleased. They have none of that strictness which distinguishes the other eastern nations; but will themselves conduct you, with the greatest alacrity, through every part of their dwelling. The merit of their complaisance is so much the greater on this account, that it cannot, in any degree, be ascribed to fear, as a stranger is here entirely in their power, and the people have a very high idea of their own military force and prowess.

AND not without reason; for they are in reality a formidable nation: numerous, brave, possessing

possessing great strength of body, and capable of sustaining fatigue, they only want a regular discipline to render their power truly respectable. Their principal weapons are the spear and scimeter, both of which they handle with great dexterity. But the use of gunpowder is not unknown to them, for they often employ muskets with matchlocks. They are frequently at war with the Siamese, over whom they have been often victorious. The prisoners taken in these expeditions they detain, and employ in the occupations to which they were brought up. Many of the ship-builders at Rangoon are Siamese, who have been taken in war. For carrying any desperate enterprise into execution, they have a set of people who, very probably, have been criminals, reserved for the purpose, to whom it is death to return without having effected the business that they were sent on. This appears a strange piece of policy, as one should imagine that those men, whom we cannot suppose to be bound by any principles of honour, or actuated by any affection for the state to which they belong, lie under great temptations to join the enemy. What means are used to prevent so probable a consequence; whether they are accompanied.

accompanied or commanded by men who are more worthy of trust and able to restrain them, or encouraged by the hope of rewards on their return with success, I have not been able to learn. Be this as it will, it is very well known, that the Birmahs are not singular in this practice, which is adopted by many of the other despotic powers of the East.

## C H A P. III.

*Of the Religion of PEGU—Its Objects—Of the Priests, or Talapoys—Of their Places of Worship—Anniversary Festivals.*

THEIR Religion bears some analogy to that of the Gentoos ; particularly in the adoration which they pay to certain consecrated bullocks, and in their abstinence from eating beef, or, to speak more properly, from killing cattle in order to eat them : for they differ from the Gentoos in this, that they will sit down to table with any one, and partake of whatever is set before them, without excepting that species of viand we just now mentioned ; and if one goes into their houses, they never fail to request he will eat along with them.

THE *Objects* of their *Worship* are numerous ; and among the rest, they pay adoration to an Evil Deity, to whom they make presents after any thing unlucky has happened, in order to appease his resentment, to which they ascribe the misfortune.

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THE *Priests*, the ministers of this worship, are called *Talapoy*s, and are easily distinguished by their dress, which consists of a yellow cloth, negligently thrown over their bodies. Their heads are shaved and constantly bare. This order is not, like that of the *Bramins*, confined to any particular cast, or tribe ; but any man who will confine himself to the rules of the society, may become a *Talapoy*. He is thereby bound to celibacy ; but to compensate for this, he is abundantly supplied with all the other enjoyments of life, without any trouble or care of his own. Every morning before the rising of the sun, the *Talapoy*s walk in procession thro' the streets, carrying in their hands a box to receive the contributions of the people ; and many of them are attended by servants, with baskets, for the same purpose. All the inhabitants wait at their doors, and put into these boxes the finest rice, and provisions of various kinds, while the *Talapoy* takes no notice of them, but walks slowly on with his eyes turned upwards, like one whose thoughts are employed on concerns of a higher nature, and who looks on sublunary things as unworthy of his attention. This body of men is very numerous, and has a considerable influence in the state. If a man who is in danger

of prosecution from the laws of his country flies to the Talapoys, and they chuse to give him an asylum, the ministers of justice dare not touch him there; and even when a criminal is condemned to death, if those priests interest themselves in his favour, they can prevent the execution of the sentence. Thus, among those unenlightened nations, where superstition reigns with unbounded sway, and where this great truth, that God is a lover of order and not of confusion, is either totally unknown, or, which is equally bad, is neglected; the persons who as ministers of his worship, and interpreters of his will, hold in subjection the consciences of the people, have always been found to obstruct the administration of justice; and thus give encouragement to vice, instead of conducting men into the paths of virtue. That the impunity which the Talapoys sometimes ensure to crimes must have these bad effects, cannot be doubted; and yet, where the Government is so rigorous as it is in Pegu, we must allow, that such a lenient power, if lodged in proper hands, and used with moderation, may often be the means of preserving a useful member to society, by affording an asylum to those who may have offended against the laws, or incurred the capricious

cious displeasure of a tyrant, more thro' ignorance than from any ill intention. But, at any rate, let us not trespass against that impartiality which is required of every person who undertakes to relate matters of fact, by leaving the reader impressed with an idea that the Talapoys extend their protection only to the guilty : No ! be it ever remembered to their honour, that they have often received into their houses, and treated with the greatest hospitality, strangers, who have suffered shipwreck on their coasts. Besides these, there is also a society of Priestesses, or female Talapoys, who undergo the same tonsure, wear the same habit, and are enjoined celibacy as well as the others. It is curious to observe the agreement which subsists, in many circumstances, between those priests, and the clergy of the Romish church, especially when they were in the plenitude of their power, two or three centuries ago. It would be superfluous to trace the particular instances, as they must be obvious to every reader.

THEIR places of worship, as well as those of the Gentoos, are called Pagodas ; but they differ in form from those that we meet with in other parts of India. To give an idea of the

whole, it will be sufficient to describe, in a few words, the *Golden Pagoda*, which is the most remarkable, and stands about three miles from Rangoon, on an eminence, to which you ascend by a flight of stairs. The Pagoda is a round building, or rather a polygon with a great number of sides, about thirty feet high, terminated above by a round spire of a very great height, which ends in a point, but differs from a cone in this respect, that a line drawn on its surface, between the apex and base, is not a straight one, but forms a curvature inwards, so that the whole approaches to the form of a speaking-trumpet. This spire is covered with gold, from which the Pagoda takes its name; and at the top is a ring, round which are hung a number of bells, that make a continual jingling noise by the agitation they receive from the wind. The building below is hollow, and there is one passage which leads into it; but this is shut up by an iron gate, which is only opened when some religious ceremony is to be performed within. Round the building are placed, on the ground, a number of figures, cut in stone, representing wild beasts, of enormous size. Close to this Pagoda is another similar to it, but inferior in size; and no person is allowed to  
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Come within a certain distance of these without pulling off his shoes. In the neighbourhood of the eminence on which the two large Pagodas stand, there are many small buildings of the same form, enclosed with iron rails, and the roofs of these also are covered with gold. We at first supposed them to be tombs, from their number, and the smallness of their dimensions; but the inhabitants assured us of the contrary, and said, they were servants, or attendants to the great one. The houses of the Talapoys are also, most of them, at a small distance from the Pagoda. Two great festivals are annually solemnized at this Pagoda. The first and principal one is on the day of the full moon immediately following the vernal equinox; and the other, on that full moon which happens in the month of August. Multitudes of both sexes flock from all quarters to the celebration of these, particularly of the first, to which they tell us, there often come visitors even from the confines of China. Close to this place is a pond, the water of which the natives believe to have a great efficacy in the cure of diseases.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the Government of PEGU---Its Form---Regulations of the Police---Of the four principal Magistrates---The Meoon---The Reoon---The Cheekaw---The Shabundar---Of the Dignity and Power of the King of Ava---History and Character of the present King.*

**I**N the Government of this country, we see despotism prevail in its full extent, and despotism too of the very worst kind; for the inhabitants are under the absolute power of a set of petty tyrants, who are themselves nothing more than slaves to the King of Ava. As they have little or no emolument, except what they can raise by extortion, it is exercised in the most unlimited manner. They take cognizance of all disputes between individuals that come to their ears, without the case being laid before them by either of the parties; and on whatever side the cause is determined, there is a never-failing charge brought in against both, for *justice*, as they express it; and this price of justice is often three or four times greater than the value of the matter in agitation. An instance of this kind fell under my own observation,

tion, in a trivial dispute, which happened between two English Gentlemen, when the judges condemned each party to pay triple the sum contested, for justice, which neither of them had ever thought of seeking at such a tribunal. Yet, however absurd this may appear, it is, perhaps, nothing more than a prejudice, arising from the force of habit, that makes us look with contempt and indignation on those mercenary retailers of justice, and yet feel no similar emotions, when we see, in a country famed for the wisdom of its Government, a poor man, by appealing to the laws of that country, in a cause where equity is plainly on his side, reduced to ruin, merely because his antagonist is rich. But the inconveniencies that this Government labours under are not only those of despotism, the unhappy subjects feel those of anarchy too. There are about twenty persons concerned in the Government of Rangoon, who, though one is subordinate to another, and though matters of the first consequence are determined in a council of the whole, can yet act separately; and any one member of this body can, by his own authority, give out orders, which no inhabitant of Pegu dares to disobey. These orders may be contrary to the sense of the whole body,

in which case they are, indeed, reversed in council ; but then, there are instances, and I myself observed one \*, of such orders being,

\* The case was this : A black inhabitant of Madras, several years ago, had contracted debts to such an amount as obliged him to leave that place ; and he chose to retire to Pegu, where he was resident when the author arrived there. On his absconding, a sentence of execution was past, in the Mayor's Court, against his goods, and among these, a ship then lying in the roads, which was accordingly sold for the benefit of the creditors. She became the property of an English Gentleman, who made a voyage in her to the eastward, and on his return put into Rangoon, a little before the author's arrival there, to purchase a cargo of wood, and give the vessel some necessary repairs. The man to whom she had formerly belonged laid claim to her, and on application to one of the Magistrates (I believe the Cheekaw), procured an order to stop from working the artificers who were then employed in refitting the ship. The owner of the vessel, on representing the case to the Council of Rangoon, got this order immediately reversed, and the artificers were again set to work, but very soon obliged to stop, by a repetition of the former order, which was again reversed by application to the Council ; and this farce was acted over and over, about six or seven times in the course of a month, to the great detriment of the owner, who had the mortification to see vessels that had arrived after his dispatched long before her. It is true, the allowance of these vexatious proceedings may be ascribed less to the want of power in the Council of Rangoon to prevent them, than to their desire of extorting money, or some such corrupt motive ; but this will make no material difference in the condition of the subject, to whom, if he suffers oppression, it is exactly the same, whether

notwithstanding, repeated more than once, by the same person, and obeyed each time till they were again reversed; nor was any redress obtained by the party aggrieved, or any effectual measures taken to prevent such a contempt of authority for the future.

YET, bad as the government of this country is in many respects, we meet with some circumstances in the regulation of their police, which may deserve the attention, perhaps the imitation, of more enlightened nations. There is here a body of men always ready to appear in arms on the least alarm, so that if any tumult arises, it is quelled immediately. They are also useful for another purpose: from the nature of the materials of which the houses in Rangoon are constructed, accidents from fire are very common; and whenever this happens, the people abovementioned (who from this have got the name of *Firemen*) are instantly assembled to extinguish it. In short, their office is much the same with that of watchmen among us, but with this difference, that the

whether that oppression arises from the impotence or the corruption of the Government under which it is his misfortune to live.

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former execute their office much more effectually than the latter ; for we have never heard of rioters being able to overpower and beat the watch at Rangoon, though nothing is more common with us than such adventures. We shall presently have occasion to speak of the strictness with which the laws are enforced in Pegu, and of their great efficacy in restraining the inhabitants, even from vices to which they had contracted the strongest propensity, from long habitude, before those laws which prohibit them were made. But it may not be amiss just to mention here an instance, that places in a striking point of view the vigour with which all measures regarding the police are carried into execution in this country. It is well known how incorrigible and impatient of restraint an English seaman is, especially when just landed, with his pockets full. In such a case, we know, it is no easy matter to restrain him from excesses, even in Europe, where he is perfectly aware that the laws will be put in execution against him. It must then be still more difficult where he thinks he has got among naked savages, and has been for some time accustomed to a country where the inhabitants are terrified at the very sight of a European ; which is literally

tally true with regard to those parts of India, where our principal settlements are formed. Yet we have seen at Rangoon, that the crew of an English vessel \*, in number about fifty, who were carried there after having suffered shipwreck, notwithstanding they had treated their own officers with contempt, and, totally disclaiming their authority, had plundered the wreck of many valuable jewels, were very soon taught to behave themselves quietly; and from that time, while they continued there, which was for the space of about two months, they never were the authors of any riot or disturbance.

THE principal magistrate in this place is the *Mecon*, who presides in Council, and is, indeed, in great measure arbitrary there, as, I believe, there is hardly an instance of any point being carried against him. He can give absolute orders about public works, or the employment of public stores. The present one is of the blood royal of Ava; but whether this is a necessary circumstance or not, I cannot pretend to determine. The inhabitants look up to him

\* The *Earl of Dartmouth* Indiaman, lost on the island of *Garnicobar*, on her passage from Madras, homeward.

as to a deity; and such is their veneration for his person and office, that no one is permitted to come into his presence without taking off his shoes. If you are permitted to sit, it is on the ground, where you must keep your face turned towards this petty monarch, and, above all things, be careful not to present to him the sole of your foot; so that your posture is not a little inconvenient: yet this man when he goes to the Court of Ava, which he is obliged to do once a year, is treated by the sovereign with no more regard than the meanest slave; and must, if required, perform the most menial offices about his person.

THE person next to him in the government of Pegu, is the *Reoon*. His particular office, independently of his being the second in Council, seems to be the administration of justice, as complaints are generally laid first before him; though when doubts arise, or the matter is of greater consequence than usual, the other members are called to give their sentiments upon it.

THE third officer is the *Cheekaw*, of whose peculiar department, if he has any distinct from his seat in Council, I know nothing; and,

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THE fourth is the *Shabundar*, who presides over the customs on goods exported or imported, and over every thing that relates to shipping arrived or sailing from the port. When a vessel comes off the bar, it is usual to send a boat up to town for a pilot, and the *Shabundar* is the person applied to for that purpose. When she arrives, it is required to deliver a list of her cargo and stores to the same person; his officers are put on board to prevent any contraband trade; and when she is ready to depart, he orders a pilot to conduct her down the river. A pilot who should carry a ship out without this order, would expose himself to the severest punishment. The present *Shabundar* is an Armenian; and, indeed, a foreigner is generally pitched on for this office, because, most probably, none of the natives are qualified for the task. All public orders are made out in the name of these four principal officers.

FROM what has been said of the respect that is paid to these men, and of their inferiority to the King of Ava, we may judge of the high veneration which that monarch is held in  
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by his subjects. And indeed they look on him as the greatest of men, or, perhaps, something more than human. But it is a truth, established both by reason and experience, that an arbitrary throne is far from being the most secure. There are no laws to give it stability, no constitution to guard its rights; the pillars which support it are mere brutal force; and the dread of a tyrant's vengeance. When these prove unable to resist the torrent of indignation that takes its rise from the distresses of an injured people, the whole fabric is overturned in an instant. Another reason why a despotic crown totters on the head of its owner, more than any other, is this, that if a competition arise, the body of the nation has neither any interest in the dispute, nor any certain rule to determine its choice. This we see exemplified in the kingdom of Ava; which, in the seven months immediately preceding our arrival at Pegu, had been subject to three different sovereigns, two of whom were deposed and murdered by their relations, who aspired to the throne. The present King is uncle to the former, whom he has put to death from these ambitious motives. He has banished  
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from his court all those who held any office under his nephew; in the number of whom is the Reoon's eldest son, who filled a place of great honour about the person of the King: After being wounded fighting in his defence, he was obliged to seek his own safety, for a while, in concealment, is now rendered incapable of any employment, and reduced to a level with the meanest of the people. His father sided with the usurper, and came down with a body of armed men to establish his authority in Pegu; for which service he has been rewarded with the important office he at present holds in that province: And though the eldest son is now restored to his father's house, yet all the train of attendants, and all the respect that he was naturally entitled to by his birth-right, are become the portion of his younger brother.

THE usurper, since his accession to the throne, has established some new regulations, or rather enforced some old laws, which had fallen into disuse, of such a nature as would lead one to think that he has turned devotee, or at least finds it convenient to wear the mask of hypocrisy, to palliate, in the eyes of the world, the violence he has done to the rights of loyalty.

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of nature, and of humanity. One of these prohibits the killing of beef, which is founded on the religious worship paid by the Gentoos to the ox; and it is the only circumstance in which we can trace a resemblance between their religion and that of the Birmahs. The second forbids the use of wine, or spirituous liquors of any kind, under no less a punishment than death itself. This last regulation has been attended with very good effects, as the Birmahs were formerly very much addicted to drunkenness; but with such strictness are punishments inflicted here, that not an instance of intoxication is now to be seen: If any one of them is prevailed on to taste liquor, he is at infinite pains to remove the smell from his mouth, by every means in his power.

## C H A P. V.

*Some Account of the Laws—Of Punishments—  
Trial by Ordeal—Laws regarding Marriages,  
and Debtors.*

**H**ERE we are naturally led to speak of the laws, but this is a subject which it is impossible for any person, from a short residence, to obtain much knowledge of; and besides, the only law, properly speaking, that exists here, is the will of the prince. However, there are certain ancient customs, which are observed as general rules, when they do not come in competition with the sovereign will; and I shall endeavour to communicate whatever knowledge I have been able to pick up concerning these.

THE end of all laws is the prevention of crimes, but among the means which may be used for attaining this end, there are some, which, though very powerful in themselves, have so much injustice in their nature, that the more civilized nations have rejected their use. I mean those punishments, which, although the

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offender himself may have got beyond the reach of the law, yet touch him in his nearest concerns, his family, and relations. This principle has its influence at present, even in our own laws ; by which a young person, born and brought up in affluence, is reduced, without any crime of his own, to the lowest ebb of misery and want, because his father has been guilty of high treason. But among us, however much the crime of one person may affect the *fortune* of another, it can expose to *personal suffering* no one but the delinquent himself ; but, in Pegu, where the nicer principles of justice and humanity are less attended to, the mode of punishment we have been talking of is exercised in its greatest extent. If a person commits a capital crime, and escapes before he can be brought to punishment, his wife, his children, and his nearest relations are put to death without mercy.

WHEN a case occurs where the evidence is so equal on both sides that the judges cannot determine which party is in the right, there is a kind of *Ordeal* prescribed, for discovering the truth. This kind of trial is founded on the belief of a just and all-mighty Being, who will,  
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they think, certainly interpose in such doubtful cases, for the protection of innocence and the discovery of guilt. The earliest instance of it that we meet with in history, is the practice ordained in the Mosaic law, for determining the guilt or innocence of a woman suspected by her husband of adultery, and very minutely described in the book of Numbers, chap. v. In this case, there was a particular interposition of Providence for *the discovery of guilt*, as the water which was given the woman to drink, could not, from any natural cause, have produced the effects that are there related. In many cases, on the other hand, the supernatural power was supposed to be exerted in the behalf of *innocence*, and the laws of nature to have their usual course, if the person suspected was guilty. Of this kind is the story of the vestal who dragged a ship up the Tiber, to prove her virginity; and in the same class we may place the trial used among our ancestors, in which the party accused was to walk, blindfolded and bare-footed, across a number of red-hot plough-shares, laid parallel to one another, at unequal distances, and the proof of innocence was his escaping unhurt. But there

are other cases, where it is certain that a crime has been committed, and we only want to discover the author of it. Where there were no circumstances that limited the suspicion to a small number, the ancients used, for coming at the truth, a method which depends on the same principle with all the others; I mean the casting of lots, which we see exemplified in the viiith chapter of Joshua. Of nearly the same nature is a practice in use, at this time, among the natives, in many parts of Hindostan: When something has been stolen, and the thief cannot be discovered, all the persons suspected are made to chew a quantity of raw rice; when from their method of doing it, or its effect on their teeth and gums, their guilt or innocence is supposed to be discovered: And the persuasion which the persons themselves who are suspected entertain of its efficacy, has often, in reality, betrayed their guilt. Either of these methods might also be used, where the suspicion lies only between two persons; but, in these cases, we find mention made of several others. In particular, we must refer to this head, the practice so frequent a few centuries ago, of judicial determinations by single combat.

bat; and of the same kind is the trial now used in Pegu. The two parties are obliged to dive into a pond set apart for that purpose; when he who can remain the longest under water is pronounced innocent, and sentence past in his favour. The practice appears to be, and certainly is, in itself, absurd; as the proof of innocence is rested on a man's ability in an art which depends on his corporeal powers, and is to be acquired by frequent exercise; but yet, were we to grant the principle before-mentioned, on which it is founded, it would be perfectly just; and it is, undoubtedly, quite as so much so as the method that was used all over Europe in the days of chivalry. For if an expert diver may now easily prove his innocence at Pegu, a vigorous combatant enjoyed the same advantage, not long ago, in Europe.

THEFT is always punished with death. The most common way of executing a capital sentence is beheading, which they perform very dexterously with a sabre, while the criminal is in a standing posture.

A FOREIGNER may marry one of the natives, on which occasion he pays a certain stipulated sum to her parents; but if he leaves the country, he is not permitted to carry his wife along with him. So strict is the law in this particular, and so impossible it is to obtain a dispensation from it, that some men who have had a great affection for their wives, have been obliged, on their departure, to carry them secretly away in jars, which were supposed to be filled with water. However, if the stranger, on going away, leaves a sufficient allowance to maintain his wife, and returns in the space of three years, he can claim her again; but if he prolongs his absence beyond that period, she is at liberty to marry another.

WHEN a man is unable to pay his debts, the creditor acquires a property in his person, and may sell him for a slave, detaining from the price as much as the debt amounted to. Hence it comes, that a man, when he purchases a wife, is obliged, beside the original price, to pay all her debts, unless he would chuse to resign her person into the possession of her creditors.

## C H A P. VI.

*State of the Arts in PEGU—Language of the  
Birmahs—Their manner of Writing—Their  
Music.*

THERE is no circumstance that enables us to judge of the advances that a nation has made towards civilization, better than a knowledge of the progress which the arts have made among them; nor is there any thing that has a greater effect on the manners and customs of a people. However, a very short discussion will suffice for this part of our subject; for it must be owned that all the arts, except one or two, which have probably owed their improvement to Europeans, since they began to visit this country, are in a very rude state in Pegu; and we may venture to say, that this will long continue to be the case, as the cultivation of arts is not esteemed an honourable employment; every idea of that kind being annexed solely to the profession of arms.

THE first employment of mankind, in every age and country, that could be called an

art, has been the culture of the earth, As soon as societies began to be formed, and men, tired of the wandering life they had formerly led, looked out for fixed habitations, they quickly found that the sources from which they had before derived their subsistence, that is; the flesh of wild animals killed in the chase, and the spontaneous fruits of the earth, were insufficient to maintain them, now that their numbers were increased, and their situation more confined. Hence they were obliged to have recourse to the breeding of tame cattle (the pastoral life), and to the increasing of those productions of the earth which they found best suited for nourishment, by *Agriculture*. But though necessity made this the first art which employed their attention, yet it has always been among the last in being brought to perfection. For this requires an intimate acquaintance with the operations of nature in the production of vegetables, which cannot be obtained but by long and accurate observation; a multitude of facts must be collected, and the reasoning faculty must have been improved by long exercise, before those facts could be applied to useful purposes. Besides, it has happened, unluckily for this art, that it has been very late in becoming  
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the object of attention with men who were capable of improving it on rational principles. Even among the enlightened nations of Europe, after philosophy had been applied with success to almost every other art, we see it was a long time before men of science turned their enquiries to the improvement of agriculture. Of its state in Pegu very little can be said : it is entirely confined to the culture of rice ; but yet, in this single branch of the art, we cannot observe without some degree of surprize, that those people, however ignorant we may esteem them, have long known and practised an operation, to the good effects of which we have, till very lately, been strangers, I mean the transplanting of grain. As soon as the rice is sown, they take care to cover the ground three or four inches deep with water, through which the blade springs up, and it is soon after transplanted into another field, where it is suffered to grow and ripen. The same method is practised in all other parts of India.

THE next article that comes to be considered is that of cloathing. The materials employed in Pegu for this purpose are silk and cotton. Though hemp and flax are produced in several parts of India, yet I have never heard of either  
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being employed as articles of cloathing ; and as to wool, it is not a product of any of the warmer climates. This covering, so comfortable and so necessary to animals in the frozen regions of the North, would be a burthen insupportable in the 'Torrid Zone ; and therefore nature, like an indulgent parent, ever attentive to the exigencies of her children, has cloathed the sheep in those countries with hair. This is evidently the final cause of the difference we observe in the cloathing of sheep in different climates : but it is also worth while to enquire for the efficient cause of this appearance ; for it is a certain fact, that the change under consideration is the natural and necessary effect of removal from one climate to another. The enquiry is curious, and may be useful ; but as it would lead us too far from our subject at present, I shall resume it in a dissertation by itself.

THE natives of Pegu have not only the art of making cloth, which has a firm texture, of each of these materials separately, but they often combine them both in one piece ; and they dye the thread used for weaving of various colours, so that the cloth made in this manner very much resembles that worn in the Highlands of  
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Scotland, usually known by the name of Tartan. And of this kind of cloth those garments are made which are worn by the men over their shoulders. But the only cloth manufacture in Pegu that is valued by foreigners is that of towels, which are esteemed for a roughness, a kind of knap that is peculiar to them.

AFTER men have provided for their food and cloathing, their next object is to secure a habitation that may defend them from the inclemency of the weather. Hence the next art that calls our attention is *Architecture*. From what we before said of the houses in Pegu, it may be concluded that this art is yet in its infancy there, and likely so to continue for a long time ; for it never makes a rapid progress in a country where wood is the principal material for building. In Pegu there are no buildings of stone except those consecrated to their worship ; and these are of that form which appears to me to have been the most ancient of any, that of a pyramid or cone. The simplest idea, and that which would most naturally occur to mankind, just emerging from the savage state, for the construction of their first huts, is that of three or four sticks fixed with one end in the ground at some distance from one another, so as to include

clude a square or triangular area, tied together by the other ends, and covered with straw, leaves, or some other materials of that kind. This would form a pyramid; and the same shape would naturally be given to the first buildings of stone, before the properties of the arch, or the use of pillars in architecture, came to be known. And accordingly we find that this was the form of the most ancient edifices we know, which were built while the art was yet in its infancy, I mean the pyramids of Egypt. For I cannot agree with a certain learned author \*, in thinking that buildings so

\* The President Goguet, in his *Origin of Laws, Arts, &c.* (Part II. Book II. Chap. 3.) quotes a passage from Pausanias, describing an edifice built by Mynias, King of Orchomena, to shut up his treasures. This edifice was a sort of rotunda, a little flatted. All the building rested on a stone, which was the centre of the arch. It served for a key to the whole work, and supported all the parts. The whole monument was of marble. It is reckoned by Goguet to have been built about seventy years before the taking of Troy. He says we must place it in the infancy of the arts among the Greeks, and condemns the judgment of Pausanias, who thinks it worthy to be put in competition with the pyramids of Egypt. Now I cannot help thinking, that notwithstanding it fell infinitely short of these in point of size and durability, it shews the art to have made a greater progress than when they were built. For those who constructed this edifice must have thoroughly understood

incommodious in their construction, can afford a proof that the art had arrived at any great perfection, though their size and solidity are monuments of the power of the monarch by whose orders they were erected. What knowledge of this art the natives of Pegu actually possess may be collected from the description formerly given of the Golden Pagoda, which is the only considerable edifice we meet with in the country.

IN the same Pagoda, and the smaller ones round about it, we find a specimen of the skill which the natives have in *Metallurgy*, at least in one branch of it, the working in gold. As this is generally found in its metalline state, it must have been the first discovered of any ; and we see, in the instance before us, that the natives of Pegu are no strangers to its wonderful ductility, nor to the application of that property to useful purposes : for, from the great extent of

derstood the properties of the arch, which is one of the most important discoveries in architecture, and cannot have been made till the art had advanced very far towards perfection. The same author, in another part of his work, seems to allow the justice of this remark. Part III. Book II. Chap. 2.

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those buildings, the roofs of which are covered with this metal, we must naturally conclude that covering to be very superficial ; and according to the best information I could obtain, those roofs have only a very thin coat of gold. They also know very well how to work in *Silver* ; and they have the art of covering utensils made of a particular kind of earth, however irregular their form may be, with thin plates of that metal, so as to be taken for solid silver, till their lightness discovers the mistake. They are now acquainted with the method of working in *Iron* ; but as that metal is not obtained from any mines in the country, I must look on this as one of the arts that have only been introduced into Pegu since the arrival of the Europeans there.

THEY are very well acquainted with the arts of *Ship-building and Navigation* ; but in what measure they are indebted to strangers for their knowledge in these respects, it is hard to determine. As the wood proper for the construction of ships is found here in greater plenty than any where else, Europeans often repair to this place for that purpose. But from whatever source the inhabitants may have derived their  
skill,

skill, it is certain they have now among them excellent carpenters; and that their own ships, managed by crews who are natives of the country, visit all the ports in India. The only peculiarity about their vessels is the substance of which the rigging of every kind is made. This is the bark of a tree, and the ropes made of it are very strong, but much less flexible than those made at *Coir*, or the fibrous substance that incloses the cocoa-nut, which is well known to be used for this purpose in all other parts of India.

THE language of the Birmahs abounds with a nasal sound, which has a disagreeable effect on the organs of one who hears it for the first time; but this gradually becomes familiar, and then you can perceive that the frequent occurrence of liquids and vowels produces a degree of softness which is by no means unpleasing. They seem to be fond of compounding words, in which, I doubt not, one thoroughly acquainted with the language would perceive a great deal of regularity: For example, in these words, *Lay-a*, hand; *Lay-maa*, thumb; *Lay-chnew*, fore-finger; *Lay-Lay-a*, middle-finger; *Lay-*

*Lay-pstegua*, ring-finger; *Lay-pfan*, little-finger: the radical word seems to be *Lay-a*, and the others to be compounded from it, by the addition of words which probably relate to the situation or use of the different fingers.

THE characters are written from left to right, contrary to the practice of most eastern nations, and have all a circular form, some being confined within the limits of the line, while others project above or below it, or both. This writing is commonly performed on *Cajans*, the leaves of the toddy-tree, by means of an iron pen with a sharp point, and in this way all public orders are written. But, besides this, they have a black paper made from the bamboo, on which they form the characters, with a pencil, made of a stone of that kind called *beatites*, which has exactly the appearance of white beeswax; and these characters may be rubbed out with a wet cloth, leaving the paper fit to be used again in the same manner.

THEY are fond of Music, which makes a great part of their entertainments; and there is a sweetness in their's that one would hardly expect

pect to meet with among a people who have made so small a progress in civilization. Their instruments are principally of the stringed kind: one is like the guitar in form, and is used in the same way; another has four strings, and is played on with a bow, like a violin, which, except that it is narrower, it resembles in shape.



along with their Betel. There is found here, swimming on the surface of the water in certain wells, a kind of Petroleum, or Naphtha, which is used like oil for burning, and also for making unctuous compositions for paying the sides of vessels.

THIS country is very plentifully supplied with all the necessaries of life. Rice is produced in abundance. The fruits are much the same with those in Bengal; such as pine-apples, water-melons, plantains, &c. They have great quantities of honey, but of a strong taste, which is not very agreeable; and it is said, if used too freely, to produce intoxication. They have plenty of poultry and game, particularly deer and wild hogs. The forests abound with wild elephants, buffaloes, and tygers; but, if we may believe the report of the natives, there is not a single jackall to be found in the country, which is a singular circumstance, when we consider in what numbers they are found in all other parts of India. They have a small breed of horses, which are much esteemed for their hardiness and patience of fatigue. Their head is somewhat large and thick, their mane and tail bushy.

briny. The natives, from habit, manage them with ease, though they are naturally hard-mouthed, and the bridles they use are but indifferently calculated for the purpose. Their method of riding appears to us ungraceful; they use stirrups, which are so short, that the thigh is nearly horizontal, or rather the knee a little elevated; and the calf of the leg is applied to the horse's side.

THE principal money of this country is silver, which is not coined, but paid by weight. The smallest denomination is the *Tycal*; one hundred Tycals make one *Vis*; and these are used in weighing goods as well as money. But another circumstance to be attended to, is the purity of the silver, of which there are three degrees, established by law or by custom; the 25 per cent. the 50 per cent. and the 75 per cent. The first has one-fourth part; the second, one-half; the third, three-fourths of alloy: and one Tycal of 25 per cent. silver, is esteemed equal in value to the Bengal Sicca Rupee. This diversity in the fineness of the current money, renders it impossible for a stranger to receive it in payment, without be-

ing subjected to continual imposition; and therefore all money matters are conducted by a particular set of men, who are answerable for the quality of the silver which they receive on account of their employer, and are thereby entitled to a certain allowance per cent. For the payment of smaller sums, they use money of lead, which is weighed in the same manner as the former.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Of the Treatment of Foreigners who trade to Pegu---Reasons for the Conduct of the Birmahs in this respect---Proposal for putting the Commerce on a better Footing than at present.*

SHIPS that frequent this port, on purpose to trade, meet with a treatment, which, in many circumstances, is extremely mortifying. As soon as they come to anchor, the guns and rudder are carried on shore, and not delivered again till the business is concluded, and the ship has obtained permission to depart. It frequently happens that difficulties are thrown in the way, by some individual in power, which detain the trader much longer than would be necessary to finish all his commercial transactions; and, besides, he is often obliged to bear with patience, because without any prospect of redress, the most shocking personal indignities. As this behaviour has rendered the trade of Pegu much less considerable than it otherwise would have been, and retarded the advancement of the country, both in richness and civilization, it will, doubtless,

appear to be very impolitic ; and yet, if independence is the greatest good that a nation can enjoy, we must confess their present conduct to be the wisest they could have pursued, as being the best calculated to preserve that invaluable possession. Any man who is acquainted with the means by which the European powers have obtained their establishments in Hindostan, will be convinced of the truth of this assertion. Under the pretence of trade, they obtained permission from the sovereigns of the districts they visited to build factories and forts, and to keep in pay a body of troops, both which they strengthened and augmented by degrees, under various pretexts, till they reduced to a state of dependence those very princes, to whose indulgence they were indebted for all their possessions. Is it then at all surprising that the Birmahs should be unwilling to encourage an intercourse, which they have seen to produce such fatal effects, and rather chuse to resign the advantages they might derive from an extensive commerce, than endanger their existence as an independent people ? Happy nation ! who are contented to enjoy the wealth which nature has, with liberal hand, bestowed on your soil, and know not the desire of foreign riches,  
and

and foreign luxuries, which has tempted others to relinquish the more substantial blessings of liberty and independence. May you long continue to preserve, with jealous care, this your most precious birth-right, and reject, with disdain, the most splendid allurements, if they tend in the least to put it in danger. Such may be the language of the philosopher, who styles himself a citizen of the world; but the member of a commercial state has different sentiments: and juster sentiments his certainly are, in the present instance; for though the Birmanhs may boast a national independence, yet personal freedom is a stranger to every individual, except the King; if indeed he can be accounted free, who is in continual apprehension, from the cabals of his nobles, and the just resentment of his people. Our citizen, then, will enquire what advantages his nation may derive from an intercourse with this people; what sources of wealth may flow from their trade; and whether, in time of war, his country can strengthen herself by their alliance, or procure from them stores for the equipment of her fleets and armies. He will next examine the probability there may be of overcoming their repugnance to the commerce of strangers, and

and endeavour to find the best means for effecting this end.

LET us now consider the subject a little in this view. And here, the circumstance that presents itself first to our attention, is the trade of wood, which is so much the more important on this account, that it is not only a considerable branch of commerce in itself, but is absolutely necessary to the carrying on of all the others. Pegu is the only source, to the eastward of *Cape Comorin*, from which a regular supply of this commodity can be obtained; and consequently, if the scene of a naval war should be laid in the Bay of Bengal, that nation which could procure wood from Pegu, would have the great advantage of being able to refit her ships much sooner, and more effectually, after an engagement, than the enemy could do. But, to be properly supplied with this valuable article, it is not sufficient to send our ships to purchase it at the port; this method is very uncertain; and, by it, we can never be sure of having stores of the quality that may be wanted; for the wood is not produced within many miles of Rangoon: the great nurseries from which it  
is

is brought are among the mountains in the very heart of the country. The wood which is cut there is floated down the river Syriam, and often consumes several months in making the voyage. It is put up, for the sake of a better conveyance, in the form of rafts, and a great number of these generally arrive together. As the time of their arrival is uncertain, it is evident that persons on the spot must be the best supplied; and, consequently, we see the propriety there would be in having agents appointed to reside here constantly, and to choose from among the wood, on its arrival, that which is of the best quality, and of the dimensions that may be wanted. This end would be still more effectually answered, if permission could be obtained to send to those parts, in the neighbourhood of which the wood is cut, proper persons, who might receive their instructions from those who reside at the port.

IF these people could be prevailed on to permit the exportation of their gold, it would, no doubt, become a valuable branch of commerce, as the Malay coast is, at present, the only part of India from which it is procured,

cured, and this is in no considerable quantity. We should thus be able to extend our trade with China; and the balance of that trade would be less against the mother country than it is on its present footing. The exportation of tin from Pegu is already great, but it might, undoubtedly, be much increased.

BUT to what purpose, it may be said, are we told of the benefit that would result from a connection formed with these people, if their aversion to an intercourse with strangers is so great as has been represented? To this I reply, that their aversion, it is true, is great; but that yet there is reason to think, it is not insuperable. In the first place, from the fondness that is shown by the natives for observing and imitating the customs of strangers, we may judge, by analogy, that they might soon be brought to form to themselves new wants, which they would be obliged to supply by a commerce with their neighbours. Next, we know, that *Opium*, which is already become a staple commodity in the trade to this country, and will, in all probability, be still more in request, if the law against the use of spirituous liquors continues in its present force, is entirely furnished  
by

by our territories in Bengal. But, setting aside all theoretical reasoning, let us confine ourselves to real examples; and we shall find that there is, at present, a factory actually established at Rangoon, belonging to the Imperial Company: It is surrounded by a wall, on which the colours of that Company is hoisted. Nay, the English Company has also had a settlement in the territories belonging to Pegu; I mean, at the Negrais. It is true, we were obliged to relinquish it; but this appears to have been more the fault of those entrusted with the administration of our affairs at that place, than of the inhabitants, who had suffered many instances of oppression, before they resolved to assert their rights by violent means. And although the behaviour of our first settlers may have inspired the natives with prejudices to our disadvantage, yet there is every reason to believe, that such a uniform moderation of conduct as has distinguished the later transactions of the British Government with the natives of India, would soon remove them all. The present Government of Pegu expresses sentiments of the highest respect for the English East-India Company; and they gave an example of it in the treatment of the *Success Galley*, which,  
because

because she was loaded on account of that Company, enjoyed much greater indulgences than any other foreign vessel that ever entered the port of Rangoon. Here, it is sufficient to hint, that a skilful management between the two nations that now inhabit this country, the original Peguers and the Birmahs, might make the nation that should undertake the office of a mediator highly respected by both parties.

A P P E N -

# A P P E N D I X.



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A N  
E N Q U I R Y  
I N T O T H E  
C A U S E  
O F T H E

VARIETY OBSERVABLE IN THE FLEECES OF  
SHEEP, AND THE HAIR OF OTHER ANIMALS,  
IN DIFFERENT CLIMATES.

**I**N CHAP. VI. I had occasion to observe, that sheep in warm climates are not clothed with wool, but, instead of that, have a covering of hair. It is true, we meet with a few exceptions, but even these have a much coarser kind of wool than sheep in colder countries. When one circumstance is so constant a concomitant of another, we are naturally led to suppose them connected as cause and effect, and to investigate the manner in which the one produces the other. To do this in the instance before us, I shall, first, briefly state the facts on which our judgment must be founded. And,

F

I. SHEEP.

I. SHEEP carried from a cold to a warmer climate, soon undergo a remarkable change in the appearance of their fleece: From being very fine and thick, it gradually becomes thin and coarse, till at length it degenerates into hair. Even if this change should not take place to its full extent, in the individual, it will infallibly do so in the course of one or two generations. The sheep that we see covered with hair are not, therefore, in reality, a different species from those that are woolly, nor is wool a production in its nature specifically different from hair; it is only a softer and finer kind of hair.

II. THE effect of heat is nearly the same on the hairs of other animals. The same species that in Russia, Siberia, and North America, produce the most beautiful and valuable furs, have nothing in the warmer climates but a coarse and thin covering of hair. We may observe the same thing in the human species: The hair of the most southern nations is remarkably coarse; and if we come to examine the appearances in the individual, every person who has experienced change of climate will testify, that the hair both of his head and beard grows faster  
and

and stronger; but, at the same time, has a tendency to become thinner in very warm weather.

HENCE, the principal effects of heat on the hair, both of man and other animals, are these three: 1st, to make it grow faster; 2dly, stronger; thirdly, thinner.

TO the truth of what has been here asserted, I foresee some objections, which, before proceeding farther, I shall relate, and endeavour to obviate. And,

(1.) THE heads of *Africans*, though living in a hot climate, are *woolly*.

THIS objection is much more formidable in appearance than in reality; and it will lose its force entirely when we observe that the substance which covers the heads of the African blacks, though from its crisped appearance, denominated wool, differs in every essential property from that which forms the fleeces of sheep in colder climates. It is coarser and harder, even than the hair of northern nations; and though it appears thicker, yet that is only

from its curling, for the roots are not nearer to one another.

(2.) THE next objection is from a passage of a very ingenious French writer \*, who observes that the wool of English sheep, tho' originally of the same race with the Spanish, is coarser and longer than this last. This seems to contradict the fact which we wish to establish, as England is a colder country than Spain. But the same author adds, that the English wool is whiter, which he ascribes to the practice of washing the fleece on the body of the sheep, especially when saponaceous waters are used, such as those of certain springs. Now, will not this practice, so different from the Spanish application of Ochre, account also for the greater length and thickness of the woolly fibres in the English sheep ?

III. LET us endeavour to learn if any other circumstances produce the same effects ; and what those circumstances are. The application of unctuous substances, as oil, grease, &c. is

\* *Considerations sur les moyens de retablir en France les bonnes especes de betes a laine dans la Dict. d'Hist. Natur. sur le mot Belier.*

known to make the hair grow faster than it otherwise would, but at the same time, I suspect, that it renders it also stronger and coarser; at least, this is generally the case with those people who use cocoa-nut oil in their hair; and we find the use of such substances is carefully avoided by those who have the management of the fine-woolled sheep in Spain; on the contrary, they apply something of a very opposite quality, a kind of Ochre, as we find in a \* letter from a Gentleman in that country, describing the sheep-walks. The author says, "It is a ponderous, "irony earth; the shepherd dissolves it in wa-  
"ter, and daubs the sheep's back with it, from  
"the neck to the rump." Various accounts are given of its operation, but all agree that it hinders the wool from growing long and coarse.

Now, the chief property in which heat and the application of unctuous substances agree, is that of producing *relaxation*; and every one knows, that all substances containing iron have a contrary effect; therefore we have a degree of probability, that *heat produces the effects*

\* See Annual Register for 1764.

*above-mentioned on the hair, by the relaxation it occasions.*

IV. LET us see, whether the anatomical construction of the parts can justify this supposition, or throw any farther light on the manner in which this relaxation operates.

EVERY hair proceeds from a root or bulb, situated in the skin (*a*), or in the adipose (*b*) membrane under it; and these bulbs are oblong bodies, having three times the diameter of the hair, and being in length five times that diameter (*c*). The bulb has vessels carrying red blood on its surface (*d*), and in the bulb a glutinous matter is deposited, some very fine filaments of which advance towards the small or outer extremity of the bulb, where they unite and form the stem of the (*e*) hair, which as it passes outwards takes one coat from the membrane of the bulb (*f*), and another from the epidermis (*g*).

(*a*) Winslow, No. 129.      (*b*) Haller Elem. Physiol.

(*c*) Monro's Lectures.      (*d*) Ibid.

(*e*) Winslow, No. 204.      (*f*) Withof, Haller.

(*g*) Ruysch, Kaaun, Withof, Haller. Mr. Maricotte says, "The hairs are composed of five or six fibres, shut up in a tube, most frequently cylindrical, sometimes  
oval

If a hair is pulled out, and the bulb remains, the hair is soon reproduced.

From considering this state of the facts, I am led to think, that an hair is not an organized body, but only a certain preparation of mucus, or rather of coagulable lymph, deposited in the bulb, and drawn out through its opening or duct, in the same manner as a wire is drawn thro' the plate. To come nearer the point, the formation of hair is a process of the same nature with the spinning of a spider's or silk-worm's thread; only in these last cases, the production is voluntary, in the first it is not \*.

" oval or angular, as we may convince ourselves by the  
 " microscope, and even by the naked eye; for when  
 " the hairs split, it is because the tube opens, and the  
 " fibres are separated." Dict. d'Hist. Natur.

\* To convince the reader that this likeness is not merely ideal, we shall transcribe a description of the organs by which the spider and silk-worm spin their threads, as it is given by those who have examined the subject with the greatest accuracy.

" At the extremity of the spider's belly, and round  
 " about the anus, there are six muscular papillæ, which  
 " are so many wire-drawing instruments, in which is  
 " moulded the glutinous liquor, which, when it is dried,  
 " is to form the silk. The papillæ have a free motion in  
 " all directions. These six perceptible papillæ are them-  
 " selves composed of small imperceptible ones, each

Similar to this was Dr. Haller's opinion of the formation of the cuticle or scarf-skin †, and

“furnished with its sphincter, to open and shut it ;  
“by which means the spider can spin coarser or finer as  
“he pleases.

“The infinite divisibility of matter, though demon-  
“strated, always startles the imagination ; the tenuity  
“of the threads which compose the silk that forms the  
“spider's web, is very proper to give us an idea of this  
“divisibility. Each of the six papillæ is itself composed  
“of a thousand insensible wire-drawing instruments,  
“which give passage to so many threads. If we consi-  
“der the fineness of this spider's silk, composed of 6000  
“threads, how immense must the tenuity be of the  
“threads which issue from the small wire-plates. If we  
“were to make the calculation, we should seem to be  
“falling into the abyss of infinite minuteness.” Dict.  
d'Hist. Nat. sur le mot Araignée.

From this description we see, that a spider's thread exactly resembles, in its construction, a hair stripped of its two external coats. The six primary divisions of thread I have seen with the help of a microscope (as will be mentioned farther on) ; but I cannot help being a little incredulous on the subject of their farther division, at least to such a degree of minuteness as is mentioned by the ingenious author ; for the diameter of such a thread could not exceed the  $\frac{1}{265448}$ th part of an inch, which no magnifiers we are possessed of could ever render visible. The same author says, the matter of which a spider forms his threads dries up as he grows old, so that he is no longer able to form a web, but is obliged to drive out a spider younger and weaker than himself, and seize upon his web. Now this is exactly analogous

† Element. Physiol.

consequently of the nails ; and we may observe that, in fact, there is a most essential difference between the growth of a hair or nail, and that

to the baldness that is produced by old age, and proceeds from the very same cause, that is, the rigidity, and, probably, the total coalition of the vessels which secreted those juices that formed the thread or hair.

“ One of the most important objects of consideration  
 “ (in the structure of the silk-worm) is, two vessels  
 “ which descend from the head, and lie upon the stomach, where, after making some turnings, they arrange themselves towards the back. These small  
 “ vessels, commonly yellow, sometimes white, are the  
 “ reservoirs of the silk ; each of them terminates at the  
 “ wire-plate, but before arriving there, they become so  
 “ fine, that they are only two threads, parallel to one  
 “ another : They make within the body of the worm  
 “ folds, which are interwoven in a wonderful manner,  
 “ as far as their lower end, which is entirely shut, to  
 “ prevent the liquid that is to form the silk from getting  
 “ out there. These vessels do not enter either the stomach, or any other part from which they could draw  
 “ this liquid, and consequently they must receive it by  
 “ communicating canals, which are infinitely fine, since  
 “ none of our ablest anatomists have yet been able to  
 “ discover them.”

Dict. d'Hist. Nat. sur le mot Ver a Soye.

These vessels, notwithstanding their many contortions, answer exactly to the bulbs of the hairs ; and only differ from them in this circumstance, which they have in common with the papillæ of the spider, that they do not give a coat to the thread, as the bulbs do to the hair. The quick production of the former rendered that impossible.

of any vascular or organized body. The increase of the last seems to consist entirely in the evolution of parts already formed in miniature. In the foetus, all the limbs exist from the beginning ; they are afterwards gradually expanded, but we see no addition of new parts. A vegetable seed contains the tree in miniature ; and when a plant grows, the part where the principal addition of substance is made every year is that which was last formed, or perhaps, to speak more properly, which was last evolved or expanded. But the case is quite different with regard to a hair or nail. The parts, once produced, never admit of any farther change ; but additions are made from the root, and the part first formed is pushed forwards by that last produced. If we make a mark on a nail or hair, it gradually goes off towards the end ; the event is totally different, when the same experiment is made on a plant.

WITH a view of discovering whether the internal structure of a hair more resembles that of a vegetable fibre, or of a thread like the silk-worm's and spider's, I have made some microscopical observations, which, altho' they did not throw on the subject that light I desired, I shall

shall relate, as it may induce some person, more conversant in such observations, and furnished with better glasses, to turn his attention this way. The glass I used was a single lens, of Wilson's construction, and my first object was to find its magnifying power, which I did in the following manner: I took a hair, and rolled it on a quill, so that the several turns touched one another, which point I ascertained exactly, by examining each turn as I made it with a good magnifier. I found that twenty-eight of these turns made one-eighth of an inch; consequently the diameter of the hair was  $\frac{1}{28}$ th of an inch. Next, I put in the microscope a small portion of the same hair, and having placed a piece of white paper in such a position, that I could look on it at the same time that I viewed the object thro' the lens; I drew on the paper two parallel lines, at a distance from each other, equal to the apparent diameter of the hair, as seen thro' the microscope. This distance I found to be one-fourth of an inch. Dividing this number by  $\frac{1}{28}$ , the real diameter of the hair, I found that the microscope magnifies the diameter of an object fifty-six times.

A HAIR,

A HAIR, seen thro' this glass, appears (as we said before) one-fourth of an inch in diameter; transparent in the middle, but marked transversely with black streaks, resembling scales, and quite opaque towards the edges.

THE thread of silk that was next examined, was, in its thickest part, about the same size of the hair; but then this thread was still much farther divisible, and some of the parts into which it was divided did not seem larger than  $\frac{1}{10}$ th of an inch; how much farther the divisions might be carried I could not determine. The whole thread, composed of these smaller fibres, appears quite opaque; but these fibres themselves, when one is separated from the rest, are transparent in the middle, exactly like the hair, which they also resemble, by the little transverse spots with which their surface is covered.

A THREAD of hemp, at one end about the same size with the hair, was split at the other into fibres, which appeared thro' the microscope about  $\frac{1}{40}$ th of an inch in diameter. The  
thick

thick end (like that of the silk) was almost quite opaque, the branches about half its size were so also; but, when their diameter was so much reduced as to appear only equal to one-tenth of an inch, they appeared striated longitudinally, with alternate black and transparent streaks. In one of this size, I counted nine black streaks, very distinctly marked.

A SPIDER's thread, at its largest part, appeared in diameter about  $\frac{6}{100}$ th of an inch. This was very regularly marked with five black streaks, between which were transparent spaces, equal in size to streaks themselves. This was split into two parts, each of which contained three black streaks and two white ones. In another part there appeared, separated from the rest, a uniformly black thread, not exceeding in size one of the black streaks before mentioned. Its apparent diameter, therefore, was about  $\frac{1}{10}$ th of an inch, and its real diameter about  $\frac{1}{400}$ . Beyond this it does not seem to be capable of any farther division. Neither the entire thread, nor any of the intermediate divisions, have any transverse marks, like those on the hair and the thread of the silk-worm.

ALTHOUGH these observations do not afford us any decisive proof, yet they render it probable that the internal structure of a hair more resembles that of a silk-worm's thread than of a vegetable fibre ; and so far the result is favourable to the idea formerly laid down concerning the formation of a hair. Admitting this idea to be just, it is plain that heat, by dilating all the vessels of the bulb, will occasion a more copious and a groffer matter to be deposited in its cavity ; and, by enlarging the orifice of that cavity, will make the hair or wire drawn through that orifice of a larger diameter. The same cause, that is, the encreased secretion of the matter which forms the hair, will make it grow faster : But, as the bulbs are placed very close to each other, when some of them are much dilated, they will compress the others, and thus prevent the secretion, and consequently the growth of a hair from them. Thus the hairs will be thinner.

To what has been said we may add, that if heat produces a groffer secretion, we should naturally suppose that more of coloured matter will be admitted ; and accordingly we find, that the hairy sheep in warm climates are, generally speaking,

speaking, coloured ; and the same is remarked of the coarse-woolled sheep in Spain \*. This circumstance, therefore, affords an additional confirmation of the theory before delivered.

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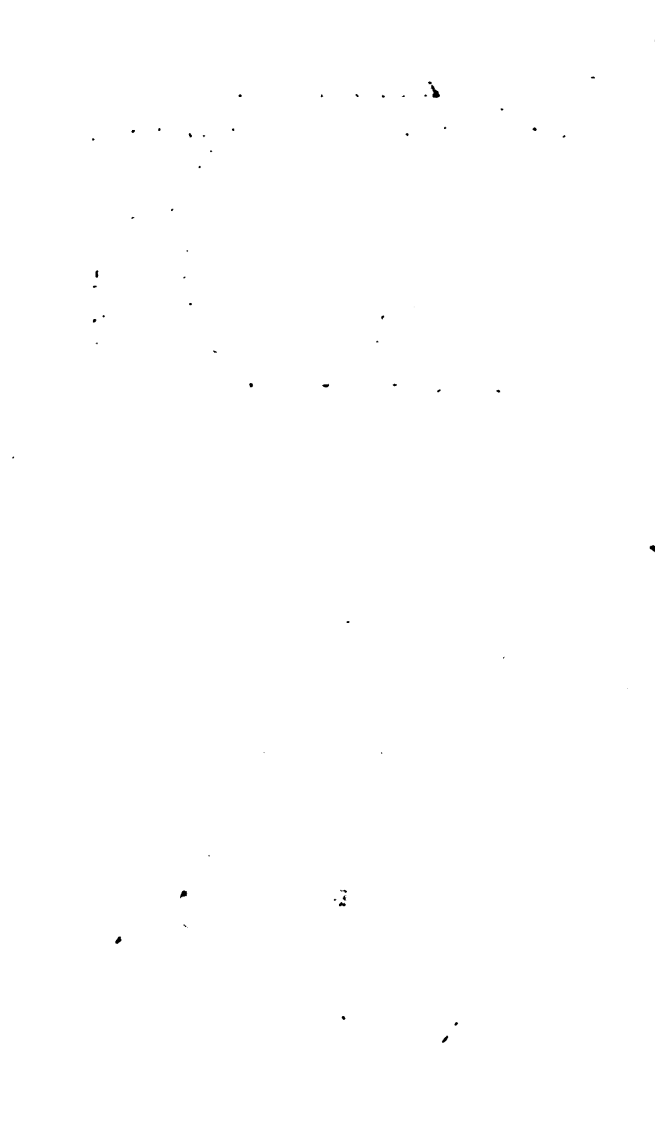
IN the above Account of Pegu, Chap. VI. I found myself obliged to differ from the President Goguet in his estimation of the Egyptian Architecture, as it is exemplified in their Pyramids. It was, however, with very great diffidence that I departed from so great an authority ; and therefore I feel a peculiar pleasure in being able to produce, in support of my own opinion, the judgment of one, who, from being an eye-witness of what he describes, is, in that respect at least, better qualified to decide than Mr. Goguet. The author I mean is Mr. Wood, who in his excellent work on the original genius and writings of Homer has the following words :

\* See the letter before quoted.

“ ARCHITECTURE, Sculpture, and Paint-  
“ ing, seem to owe little to Egypt. If the  
“ temple of Theseus stands to this day at  
“ Athens, an undoubted proof of the great per-  
“ fection of the Greek Arts, as early as the  
“ battle of Marathon ; in a climate so favour-  
“ able to buildings as that of Egypt, where  
“ there are still considerable remains to be seen  
“ of pyramids of such perishable materials as  
“ unburnt bricks, some fragments surely would  
“ have been preserved to justify their preten-  
“ sions. But tho’ we are apt to trace every  
“ thing back to Egypt, I believe in this art  
“ the Greeks are entirely original, and took  
“ their ideas from nature alone. And it ap-  
“ pears in sculpture, that the Egyptians stuck  
“ to their own stiff dry manner, even after they  
“ were acquainted with the perfect models of  
“ the Greek Artists.

“ EGYPT has, no doubt, produced the most  
“ stupendous and amazing, but I must add, the  
“ most *absurd and unmeaning* public works to be  
“ seen in any country ; I mean *Pyramids, Obs-*  
“ *lisks*, Labyrinths, Artificial Lakes, which  
“ are without *Art, Elegance, or public utility.*  
“ Though

“ Though jealous of strangers, they took little  
“ pains to fortify their frontier, and seemed to  
“ have placed their security more in hiding  
“ than in defending themselves. And tho’  
“ well situated for commerce, they neglected  
“ a good harbour, of which the Greeks shewed  
“ the value and importance as soon as they  
“ got possession of this country.”



A  
DESCRIPTION  
OF SOME  
ARTIFICIAL CAVERNS  
IN THE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD OF BOMBAY.

**I**N different parts of the island of Salfette, and in the neighbourhood of that of Bombay, we meet with some most stupendous monuments of human labour and ingenuity, which would be matter of admiration in any part of the world, but must astonish us still more when we find them in a country remarkable for the indolence of its present inhabitants. These are a set of enormous excavations, all of which are made in solid rocks, and decorated with a variety of figures, most curiously cut from the same substance with the Caverns themselves. The most remarkable of these is in the small island of ELEPHANTA, situated on the east side of the harbour of Bombay. This island runs to a con-

## 24 A DESCRIPTION OF SOME

siderable height in the middle, and has a slope to the north and south, in which direction is its greatest length. Near the south end is the figure of an Elephant, rudely cut in stone, from which the island has its name. The length of the body is twelve feet, the height about eight. The trunk is rolled up in a spiral form, and pretty well cut. The legs are shapeless masses of matter, out of all proportion too large, and seem intended merely as pillars to support the fabric. We must look in the same light on the tail, which is massy, and reaches to the ground; and on a pillar, which is placed under the posterior part of the abdomen. On the back of the Elephant is an irregular mass, which is said to have represented a young animal of the same species. The whole seems to have been cut from one piece of stone; but the body is now split in two, and there are visible traces of its having been done by gunpowder. About half a mile to the northward, you are conducted, by a pretty steep ascent up the side of a rock, to the door of the Cave, which enters from the north. By this door you are led first of all into a Feerandah, or Piazza, which extends from east to west sixty feet: its breadth from north to south is sixteen feet. In the

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the west end is a human figure, with eight arms, four on each side, united at the shoulder, one behind the other. On the right, the foremost arm passes across the body, and is applied to the opposite side, at that part where the inhabitants of the country wear their *Creeper* or dagger, as if about to draw it. The second is thrown out from the body, and the fore-arm has been bent, so as to come before the breast, but is broken off a very little way beyond the elbow. The humerus of the third is parallel to the former, but the fore-arm entirely broken off. The fore-arm of the fourth is bent upwards, but broke off near the wrist. The two first arms on the left side are gently bent, and hang downwards. The third holds a small female figure; and the fourth is extended above the head, to support an irregular body, something like the folds of a hanging collected together. The right thigh is bent outwards, almost at right angles to the body, but broke off near the knee. The left is broke off near the hip. This figure is surrounded by a number of smaller ones, in various attitudes.

IN the east end, is another human figure, which is now nothing more than a bust, as it

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the left side of this hangs a strap, joining with, and probably supporting a garment, which first appears at the right hip, passes over the thighs, under the genitals, which it leaves uncovered, and is tied in a large knot on the out-side of the left thigh. From this knot it is reverted over that thigh, and crosses the other part of the same garment, from whence the end hangs loose between the legs. The left hand rests on the large knot of this garment. The left thigh and knee, in particular, are well executed. The patella is distinctly formed, and you can clearly perceive the swelling of the vasti muscles, especially the vastus internus. The legs are not handsome, as they taper from the knee, and have little or no calf; however, they much resemble those generally met with among the inhabitants of this country.

IN the north end of the west Feerandah is a very extraordinary figure, with eight arms, his body inclined very much to the left, his legs folded under him, but too much mutilated to determine their real position. Two of the arms support a curtain, or canopy over his head. On this canopy sit a number of figures in the attitude of devotion. One of the right hands

hands holds a sword, one of the left a pedestal, on which is placed a small figure, with his back turned to the large one, and inclined so much backwards, that his head, when entire, must have hung very low; but that which is now wanting, and the figure, in other respects, very much mutilated. From the things held in these two hands, some travellers have imagined this figure to represent Solomon in the act of dividing the child; an idea so repugnant to all probability, that I should not have thought it worth mentioning, if I had not found it asserted with a great degree of confidence. In another of the left hands is a bell, an instrument well known to be used in the religious ceremonies of the Gentoos. The arms and hands of the large figure that are entire, and six in number, are extremely well executed: the other two are broke off.

We have already seen that the people, whoever they were, who engraved these statues, have accurately observed, and expressed successfully, the form of the limbs, and the alterations that they undergo from muscular action or external impulse. But in the opposite end of this Feerandah is a groupe of figures, which shews them

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to have been possessed of a much more difficult part of the statuary's art, I mean that which represents the effect of mental sensations on the human countenance. The three principal figures which compose it, are two men, and a woman placed between them, all in an erect posture. One of the men rests his hand on the shoulder of the woman, who seems studiously to turn away from him. The other man, from his air, has the appearance of superior rank; and, if we may judge from the resemblance of his dress to that used by the Brahmins of the present times, belongs to that sacred order. An air of dejection is visible in every one of these figures, their heads are gently declined, and every feature is expressive of grief; not indeed of any violent agitation, but of a settled deep-rooted concern. It must indeed be owned, that when we meet with a single figure that strongly expresses any particular passion, the disposition of features that produces this effect may be the work of chance; but if we find an entire groupe of several figures, which all appear to be engaged in a consistent scene of action, and animated with the same emotions, it would argue a most unwarrantable prejudice, not to discern the hand

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of the artist, who knew to express, in the lineaments of the face, the feelings of the human heart.

BUT the most remarkable figure of all is in the south Feerandah, on the middle of the wall, directly facing the main entrance of the Cave. It is an enormous bust, with four heads, joined behind the ears. One presents itself directly in front, two more are seen in profile, and the fourth does not appear, being hid behind the first. The first is four feet from the top of the brow (where the usual ornament of the head begins) to the bottom of the under lip; the nose is about one foot and an half in length: The whole length of the face is four feet and an half; the breadth, from the ear to the middle of the nose, three feet four inches. The breadth of the whole figure, between the shoulders, is about twenty feet. This face has a drowsy, but placid appearance; that on the left (of the spectator, who faces it) has the eye-brows contracted, the skin of the nose drawn upwards, and the *alæ nasi* distended, expressing contempt, mixed with indignation. The mouth is furnished with whiskers, the tongue thrust out between the teeth, and the whole

## 94 A DESCRIPTION OF SOME.

whole features are in some degree monstrous. There are four hands, one on each side, and two others half way between the former and the middle of the figure. The outermost right hand (that most to the left of the spectator) holds a large hooded snake, of the kind called Cobrecapelle. The middle finger is not quite entire, but must have been about three feet and a half in length. The thickness of the snake is about a foot. The inner hand on this side is entirely broke off, but appears to have held a snake of the same kind as the former. The inner left hand supports a body of an oblate spheroidal shape, with a conical protuberance at top, and covered with scales, like a squill or lily root, of such a size as to fill the palm of the hand completely. The remaining face has a more pleasing aspect than the last : the under lips of both are remarkably thick. The outer left hand rests upon the shoulder, with the palm turned inwards, and holds an irregular body, like a bunch of flowers. May we not ascribe the difference which is so remarkable in the aspect of the two last mentioned faces, to the nature of the objects which are held in the two hands, directly in view of those faces ? All the  
heads

heads have very large ear-rings, and much the same ornaments as those before described.

On the east end of the same wall is a female statue. Her left breast, which is the only one, is very large and globular, and it is very plain there has never been another. The right arm rests on the head of a bull; the left hangs down, and takes hold of something which is so much mutilated, that we cannot discover what it has been meant to represent. Behind these are two other arms; the right supports a snake of the kind before mentioned; and in the left she holds a small shield, grasping it by that part which is meant for the insertion of the arm. The shield is round, and regularly convex on the outside, which the statue turns towards herself, holding it nearly on a level with the shoulder. She has double bracelets on her two left hands, and a ring on each finger; but on the right are single bracelets, and a ring only on the little finger. She leans to the right side, which ought to make the left hip project a little, but that projection is greatly exaggerated in the representation, which makes it appear distorted. This figure is surrounded with many smaller

## 95 A DESCRIPTION OF SOME

smaller figures, both human and animal, in various postures. The whole number contained in the groupe is forty-one.

ON the left side of the great figure with three faces is a male statue, at full length. His left hand leans, or rather presses, on the head of a dwarf, who, by the position of his body, and expression of his countenance, seems to experience great torture. These dwarfs are a kind of monstrous figure which very often occur in this Cave. They have heads of an enormous size, with very short necks. The breasts are contracted, but the belly large, prominent, and much longer than it ought to be, in proportion to the other parts. The legs and thighs are very small, bearing no proportion, either in length or thickness, to the rest of the figure. They are commonly placed, as in the present instance, close to a large statue, who leans on them, and sometimes appears to give them very great pain. This dwarf holds in his right hand a snake, twisted in a variety of folds. The large statue, from the string over his left shoulder and breast, appears to be of the order of Bramins. A number of figures round him are  
pre-

presenting offerings, one of which is a fish. One small statue is kneeling at the feet of the large one with his eyes turned upwards. Another on his right has a knife by his side, very distinctly made. The ribbed plate on the back of the head of this image is of a circular form, and, being turned to the spectator, is seen complete. On the left, in the same nich, is a representation common enough in this cave, that is, one figure sitting with his legs over the shoulders of another.

FROM the east side of the great Cave you enter into an area, in which are several small apartments. On the south wall of this area is a gigantic figure, who rests his left arm on the head of a dwarf, his right supports a snake. He has a broad sword hung at his left side, by that belt or garment which in most of the other figures passes over the thighs; only in this figure it descends towards the right thigh, instead of the left. He has four hands; the hinder left one supports a small human figure. One of the right hands is broke off entirely. The ornament on the head of the dwarf resembles a cushion, and above that is placed a solid body,

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like the round ring of one of the pillars with part of the column, and on this the giant rests his hand. Round the body of the dwarf is twisted a snake, and his head hangs down below the left hand of the dwarf. The length of this area is fifty-eight feet, and at each end is a small apartment, the floors of which are covered with water. That on the west is decorated with many figures, two of which resemble those that are adored by the Gentoos at this day. That in the east end is entirely without ornament. Opposite to the middle of the area is a chamber, with a small mausoleum within it.

FROM the west end of the great Cave you enter into another square area, open above, which has been cut up thro' the whole thickness of the rock, about forty or fifty feet. In this are two small apartments, which have nothing remarkable in them, and an irregular cavern, full of water, which reaches inwards below the bottom of the Cave, so far that the eye cannot discover where it terminates.

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THE whole Cave and the apartments adjoining to it are cut out of a solid rock, which is greatly harder than any of those that remain to be described.

THE figures have suffered nothing from time ; but all the mutilations which they have sustained proceed from the brutal violence of barbarians, who delight in mischief, and are enemies to taste and science.

THE next that we shall take notice of is the cave at AMBOLA, a village about seven miles distant from *Tannah*, in the island of *Salsette*. The Cave lies about a mile to the westward of the village. The principal entry is from the west ; it is about eight feet wide, and is covered at the beginning with an arch formed by the trunk of a tree, laid across, the head of which has taken root. From the middle of it some large branches have sprung up, forming a new tree. From this the passage continues of the same breadth for about thirty feet, when it is extended to three times its former breadth. You advance about twelve feet more, and then come to a flight of seven steps, which leads down into the Cave.

The great gate is about twenty feet high (including the height of the steps), and the cheeks of it appear to have been fluted columns, but are now entirely defaced. By this gate you enter into an antechamber, which has at each end a small Feerandah, separated from the rest of the place by a row of three pillars. Directly facing you is the door of the Cave, on each side of which is a figure, which we can just distinguish to have been human, so much have they suffered from the ravages of time. That on the left has the head more than half consumed; only the stumps of both arms are left, but from the position of these stumps, and still more from the analogy of the other figures, which are more entire, it appears that the left arm has been in a depending posture, with the elbow bent. The figure on the right is much in the same posture, the head and left arm are more entire, and the former is covered with something that has the appearance of a helmet. The great Cave into which you enter by this gate is a square of eighty-eight feet, within which are contained two smaller squares concentric to the large one; the outer formed by pillars, placed parallel to the sides of the great square, at the distance of fifteen feet from the outer wall of the Cave.

Each

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Each row consists of six pillars, including the end ones, in all twenty. The pillars are about thirteen or fourteen feet high, and of the same form with those in the Cave at ELEPHANTA. In the center of this square, at the same distance of fifteen feet, is the innermost of all, inclosed by a solid wall, and having a door on each side. From the dimensions delivered above, we find the side of this square to be about twenty-two feet, allowing for the thickness of the pillars, which is the same as at ELEPHANTA. Within this chamber is a cubical mass, which appears to have been the pedestal of some Gentoo deity, as this place is still consecrated to their worship. On the top of this cubical mass is erected a wooden frame, on which hangs a bell, used by the Gentoos in their religious ceremonies. In the east end of the Cave are three doors, by which you enter into another apartment. The middle door leads into the body of this apartment, and the other two enter into two Feerandahs, separated from the place itself by rows of pillars, such as before described. On each side of the middle door, within this apartment, is a gigantic figure, attended by smaller ones. That on the left hand of the spectator is entire in all the parts above the hip, except the two hands,

## 102 A DESCRIPTION OF SOME

which are both broke off. He is of a robust make, well proportioned, and finished in a masterly manner. The face is broad, with a spacious forehead, the cheeks are full, and the whole countenance has an air of serenity, but without expressing much acuteness or penetration. This figure has no beard, nor have any of the others, except one which is in a small groupe over the large figure we are now describing. The hair of this gigantic statue is bushy, and formed into curls, which hang down upon the neck; there is a pyramidal ornament on the crown of the head; the ears are pierced, and have large jewels suspended from them. Over the left shoulder is thrown a chain, which descends across the body as far as the right hip. Round the waist, about the top of the bones which form the pelvis, another chain is passed, from the right side of which there hang two smaller chains, that are soon lost in a garment which descends in a slanting direction from the right side, covering that thigh and the lower part of the left. The right arm is bent up towards the top of the shoulder, probably to hold the garment before mentioned. The left arm hangs down nearly strait, and almost parallel to the body. The legs are miserably defaced, so  
that

that we can just discover the right foot to have been advanced before the left. A chain goes round each arm about the insertion of the Deltoid Muscle, and has on the outside the figure of a face. On the left of this statue are two smaller figures, one of which is higher by the head than the other, and stands behind him. They seem to represent children, from the size of the head, which is very large, in proportion to the body. Both these figures have rings in their ears, and their hair has much the appearance of a wig. The larger has his right hand raised as high as the top of his shoulder, and rests it on the head of the other, who appears to stretch out his neck and look forward with great eagerness at some distant object. The body of this one below the neck is entirely demolished.

THE figure on the other side of the door is of the same exquisite workmanship with the former. The right arm is in the same posture with that last mentioned, and suspends a garment, which is very distinctly represented. It covers both thighs; and all the parts from the top of the *Os Ilium*, to within a hand's-breadth of the knee. It is tied in a knot on the left

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hip, from which it hangs down in loose folds. As far as we can judge from what remains of the legs, the left advanced one step forwards. The left arm rests on the head of a dwarf, such as above described, who has in his right hand something like a snake, and with the left supports some animal, the species of which we could not determine. Over the top of the door are several groupets of small figures, admirably executed.

THIS apartment is about thirty feet long, and has a door in the east end, which leads into two small Caves, in neither of which is there any thing remarkable. The two doors of this apartment, the east and west ones of the small square in the middle of the great Cave, and the two first described, which form the principal entrance, are all in a straight line, in length about one hundred and thirty feet.

FROM the south side of the Cave you enter into an irregular passage in the rock, which ascends, by a gentle slope, towards a hole just large enough to let a man of a slender make creep through, which leads into a passage between two pretty high rocks. But another branch

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branch of the same subterraneous cavern strikes off to the right, and, after making a turn, which prevents one at first entering from seeing the end, leads you to the door of a small regular apartment, the floor of which is covered, about three inches deep, with very clear water. This apartment is divided into two, one behind the other, and in the former of these is placed a Gentoë deity.

THE whole Cave is cut out of the rock, in the same manner with that at ELEPHANTA, but the stone is of a much softer quality; so that, although the figures here bear fewer marks of violence than those at ELEPHANTA, they have suffered much more from the hand of time, in so much that some of them are more than half mouldered away. The two large figures in the small apartment seem to be an exception to this general observation; for, though some of their limbs are broken off, the parts that remain have a smooth surface, and are much harder than the other parts of the Cave.

BUT the most numerous collection of these Caves is at CANARA, a place within about ten miles of *Tannab*, and more to the northward than

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than AMBOLA. Here a very large hill is almost totally surrounded with these excavations, of various forms and sizes, but none of them are finished in such an elaborate way, or decorated with so numerous figures, as those we have already described. I shall not, therefore, enter into a tedious description of each particular Cave, but only mention some remarkable circumstances in which these differ from the others. The pillars we meet with here are rudely hewn, of irregular shapes, and without much uniformity, one with another. Many of these Caves are more than double the height of those at ELEPHANTA or AMBOLA; and some of them have square holes, at equal heights, on opposite sides of the walls, as if intended for beams to support a floor. And this idea is confirmed by their having windows at that height. Many of these Caves are very small, but others do not yield in extent to those above described, and are furnished with vestibules, from which you enter into the body of the place. One of these vestibules has, at each end, a statue at full length, of a much larger size than any of those before described, except the bust ~~which~~ three faces in the Cave at ELEPHANTA. They stand in two niches, and, by that means, are  
more

more nearly detached from the rock out of which they are cut than any of the others. The statues are in height about twenty feet, and, in every respect, well proportioned. Their heads are bare, and the hair formed into curls. It is to be observed, that we do not find in these Caves any of the monstrous figures which occur now and then at AMBOLA, and much more frequently at ELEPHANTA. On the wall of one of these Caves, is a pretty long inscription, very entire, from which it is reasonable to suppose some curious information might be collected with regard to the antiquity and original design of these Caves. All I could learn concerning it was, that it is in the Gentoo language, and contains benedictions pronounced on those who shall come to this place to worship. If this is true (for I do not give it as a certain fact) it determines, at once, the design for which these immense works were undertaken, in a manner that is very probable from many figures which resemble the Gentoo deities, and, still more, from the Cave at AMBOLA being consecrated to religious worship at this time.

THE antiquity of all the Caves is undoubtedly very remote ; none of the inhabitants have any tradition relating to their origin ; and, indeed, many circumstances would lead us to suppose that they have been constructed by a very different race of men from those who now inhabit this country. In the first place, the present inhabitants are extremely indolent, and very unlikely to execute a work of such enormous labour. When they make any attempts in sculpture, their performances are almost all of the monstrous kind, and destitute of grace or proportion ; whereas the majority of the figures now described are natural, and even most of those which are monstrous have limbs elegantly proportioned. It is, farther, natural to suppose, that those artists would take the models of their work from among themselves, and the figures are very far from resembling the present race of Indians. The general form of the body is more robust and muscular ; but the most remarkable difference lies in the countenance, which is broad and full, with the nose flat, the lips (particularly the under one) remarkably thick, and the whole combination of features very unlike those of the present inhabitants of Hindostan. And the peculiarities here described are

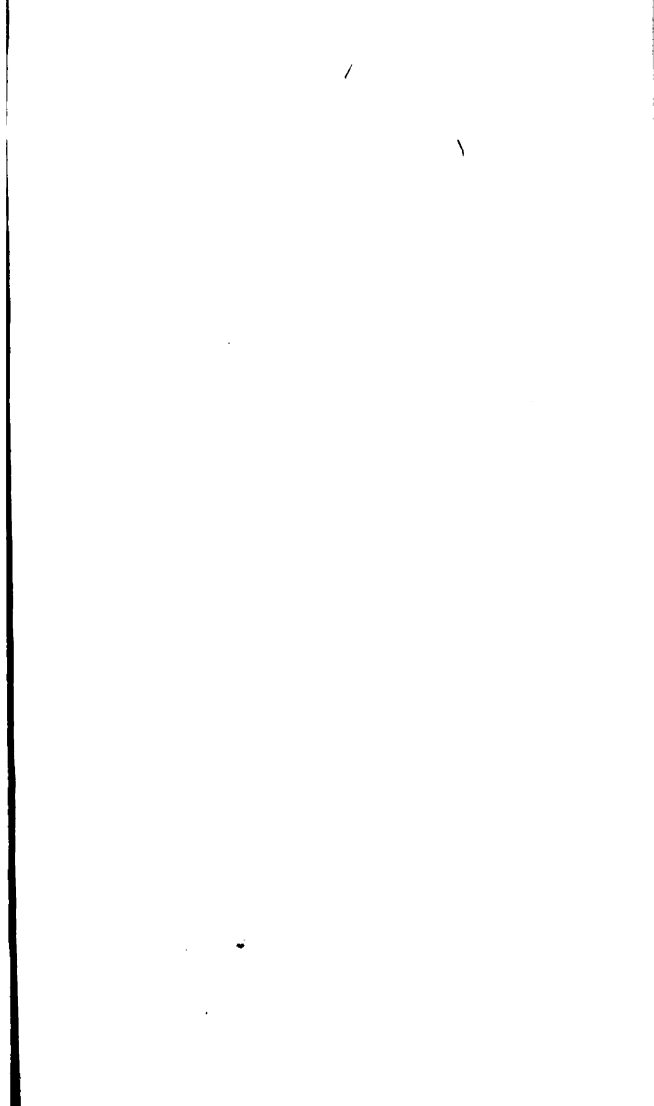
are so universally found in all the figures, that they cannot be ascribed to any fortuitous circumstance. An argument against what has now been said might be taken from the inscription mentioned above, which is said to be in the language spoken by the Gentoos at this day ; but, allowing this to be true, there is no evidence that this inscription is coeval with the Cave itself.

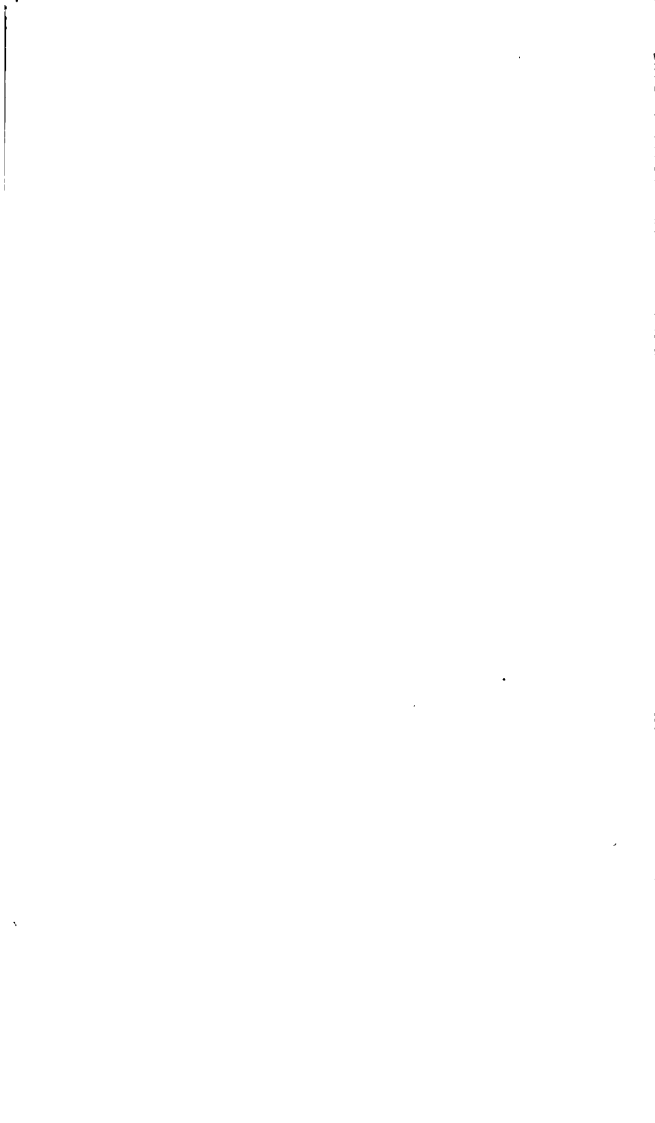
FROM the simplicity which reigns through the whole of the Caves at CANARA, and the total want of those monstrous figures which we meet with in the others, I think it probable that the former are the most ancient of the whole, and that the others have not been made till both the taste and the mythology of the people began to be corrupted.

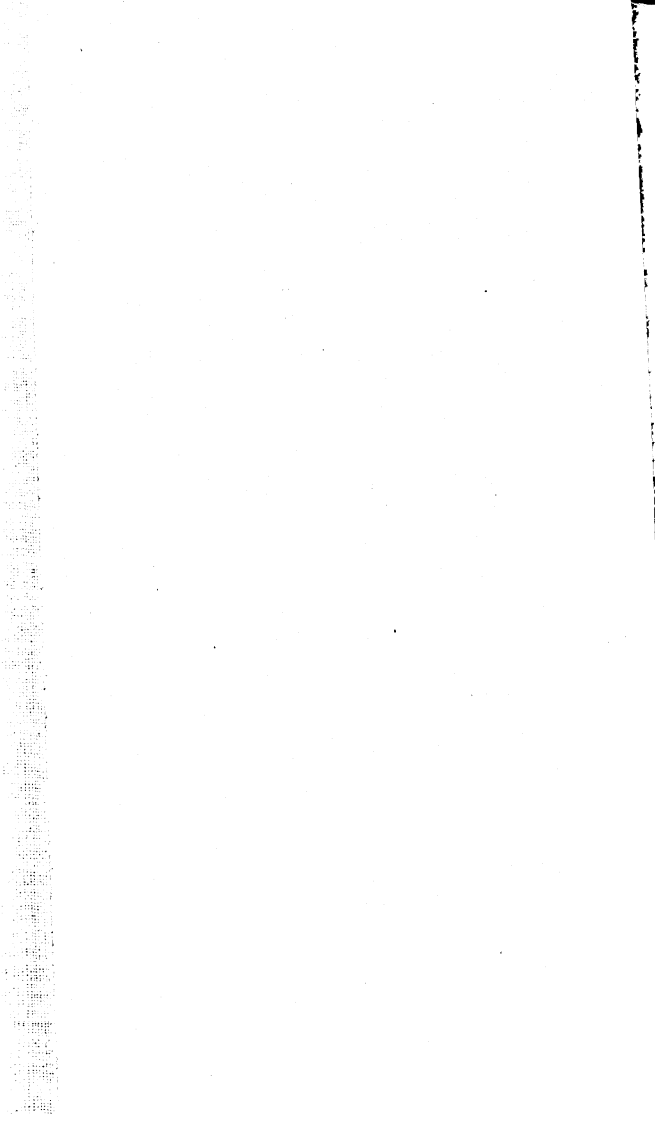
FROM considering the incredible labour that must have been employed in cutting these cavities in a hard and solid rock, the idea has been suggested, that it may, at the time these works were performed, have been of a softer consistence, and been hardened by exposure to the air : and indeed, this conjecture appears, from the  
many

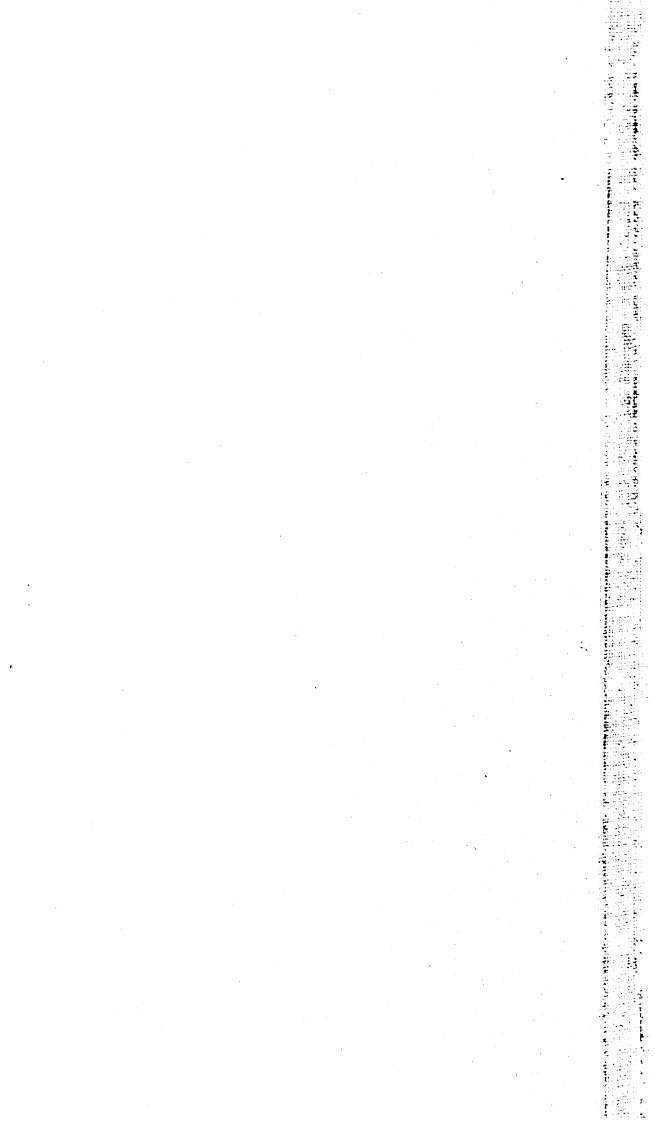
many fimilar instances known to every one, to carry with it a great degree of probability. It would not be difficult to put this to the teft of experiment, by digging into fome of the adjacent parts ; and, as the enquiry is curious, the attempt would be well worth the while of any perfon who fhould have time and opportunity to profecute the fubject.

F I N I S.









MAR 14 1932

